the weekly
Standard

FEBRUARY 18, 2002

$3.95

BUSH KEEPS THE FAITH
JOHN J. DIIULIO JR.

On to Iran!

Checkmating the Clerics

by Reuel Marc Gerecht

#BXNFMVD ****** 5-DIGIT 94301
#UNZ0555B096 1#302604 WK 004535
RON UNZ NOV 11 02 000029
371 BALN 000345
555 BRYANT ST 001
PALO ALTO CA 94301-1704

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POWERFUL VOICES.

America has always counted its people as its most important resource. The members of CARE, the Coalition for Affordable and Reliable Energy, represent more than 23,000 companies and organizations across the country. Those companies and organizations employ or represent millions of Americans in every state and in virtually every sector of our economy. We are united in our commitment to reliable, domestic energy, and we urge Congress to act now to support a comprehensive national energy policy.

At its heart, America relies on electricity from coal, and with reserves that will last 250 years, electricity from coal will supply our energy long into the future. Billions of dollars invested in new technology have made electricity from coal cleaner and more efficient than ever. As use has nearly tripled in the last 30 years, the rate of emissions by electricity from coal has dropped by more than 50 percent. With electricity from coal, we've got reliable energy to keep us going for centuries to come.

It's time for Congress to help move us toward that future.

Aluminum Association
American Association of Port Authorities
American Bakers Association
American Boiler Manufacturers Association
American Chemistry Council
American Health Care Association
American Iron and Steel Institute
American Portland Cement Alliance
American Public Power Association
American Sheep Industry Association
American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association
American Trucking Associations
American Waterways Operators
Americans for Tax Reform
Association of American Railroads
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen
Center for Energy and Economic Development
Construction Industry Manufacturers Association
Council of Industrial Boiler Owners
Edison Electric Institute
Federation of American Hospitals
Frontiers of Freedom
General Mills
Goodman Manufacturing Corporation
Institute of Makers of Explosives
Intermodal Association of North America
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
International Dairy Foods Association
Motor Freight Carriers Association
National Asphalt Pavement Association
National Association of Manufacturers
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Cattleman's Beef Association
National Food Processors Association
The National Grange
National Mining Association
National Retail Federation
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
National Waterways Conference, Inc.
Oracle Corporation
Railway Progress Institute
The Salt Institute
Small Business Survival Committee
Snack Food Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
United Mine Workers of America
United Transportation Union

CARE THE COALITION FOR AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE ENERGY

We are CARE—a coalition dedicated to the development of a sound energy policy for America.
To find out more, visit www.CAREenergy.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

February 18, 2002 • Volume 7, Number 22

2 Scrapbook..... *Sheila Jackson Lee, Olympics, and more.*

4 Casual..... *Fred Barnes, Mr. Wizard.*

6 Correspondence..... *Doris Kearns Goodwin, etc.*

9 Editorial..... *No Medals for Title IX*

Articles

12 Borking Judge Pickering *It's open season among Senate Democrats on Bush's nominees*..... BY TERRY EASTLAND

13 My Fellow Lefties... *Stop it with the America-bashing*..... BY MICHAEL H. SHUMAN

15 When Bush Met Sharon *The key visit was the first one*..... BY JOHN PODHORETZ

16 Profiles in Ambivalence *After September 11, Muslim-American groups flinched.* ..... BY NOAH D. OPPENHEIM

18 The Wreck of the Deutschland *Germany's economy and Gerhard Schröder are in trouble.* BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

20 Despotism in Saudi Arabia *They're even more intolerant than you think.* ..... BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

Cover: AP Photos / Vahid Salemi

Features

22 On to Iran!

Checkmating the clerics..... BY REUEL MARC GERECHT

30 Bush Keeps the Faith

Contrary to reports, the president's faith-based agenda is alive and well. .... BY JOHN J. DIIULIO JR.

Books & Arts

35 God, Man, and Physics *Does the universe aim at human life?*..... BY DAVID BERLINSKI

38 Looking Backwards *Pat Buchanan's world*..... BY JOSH CHAFETZ

40 Printing the Web *Why do online magazines want their work preserved in books?*..... BY RICHARD KOSTELANETZ

41 Fighting Death *The argument against euthanasia*..... BY WESLEY J. SMITH

43 The Standard Reader ..... *A literary classic updated:* The New Bill James Historical Baseball Abstract.

44 Parody..... *Blog ad nauseam.*

William Kristol, *Editor* **Fred Barnes,** *Executive Editor*
David Tell, *Opinion Editor* **David Brooks, Christopher Caldwell,** *Senior Editors* **Richard Starr, Claudia Winkler,** *Managing Editors*
J. Bottum, *Books & Arts Editor* **Matt Labash,** *Senior Writer* **Stephen F. Hayes,** *Staff Writer*
Victorino Matus, David Skinner, *Assistant Managing Editors* **Lee Bockhorn,** *Associate Editor*
Jonathan V. Last, *Online Editor* **Bo Crader, Beth Henary, Elizabeth Royal,** *Editorial Assistants*
Katherine Rybak Torres, *Art Director* **Jan Forbes,** *Production Manager* **Kent Bain,** *Design Consultant*
Tucker Carlson, John J. DiIulio Jr., Noemie Emery, Joseph Epstein, Andrew Ferguson, David Frum (on leave), **David Gelernter, Brit Hume, Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, Tod Lindberg, P. J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Irwin M. Stelzer,** *Contributing Editors*
Terry Eastland, *Publisher* **David H. Bass,** *Deputy Publisher*
Nicholas H.B. Swezey, *Advertising & Marketing Manager* **John L. Mackall,** *Advertising Sales Manager* **Lauren Trotta Husted,** *Circulation Director*
Carolyn Wimmer, *Executive Assistant* **Tina Winston,** *Finance Director* **Catherine Titus,** *Publicity Director*
Taybor Cook, Angel Jones, *Staff Assistants*

the weekly Standard

THE WEEKLY STANDARD (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly (except the second week in January, the fourth week in April, the second week in July, and the fourth week in August) by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-850-682-7653 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. For a copy of THE WEEKLY STANDARD Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. THE WEEKLY STANDARD Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call John L. Mackall 1-202-496-3354. Copyright 2002, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in THE WEEKLY STANDARD may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. THE WEEKLY STANDARD is a trademark of News America Incorporated.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

www.weeklystandard.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Another Ride with Sheila Jackson Lee

In last week's WEEKLY STANDARD, Sam Dealey reported on Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee's using a government car and driver to chauffeur her one block to work on a regular basis, in seeming violation of Congressional Handbook rules. THE SCRAPBOOK hears that several members are considering filing formal ethics charges against Jackson Lee for misuse of public funds. But Leon Buck, an on-again off-again aide to the Texas Democrat, says Jackson Lee has a confidential memo from the Committee on House Administration clearing her of any wrongdoing (though he won't release it to us).

As the House ultimately must enforce its own rules, it's certainly possible it will decide to follow the philosophy of Plunkitt of Tammany Hall, who memorably asked: "What's the Constitution among friends?" A greater inducement for Jackson Lee to shape up may come from public censure. And the public has taken notice. Since last week, we've been inundated with tales of the member's diva-like propensities.

According to a former Houston Aviation Department official, when Jackson Lee was a member of the City Council in the early 1990s, her staff would routinely call the airport's operations office to let them know she was on her way but "running late." Airport subalterns were expected to meet her at the door of the terminal and drive her personal car to the parking garage. Jackson Lee soon came to expect this curbside valet service from city employees. It wasn't until the employees asked for some document giving them indemnity from liability should something happen to her car that her demands stopped.

And it seems Jackson Lee exports her boorish behavior abroad. A veteran reporter described for us the inauguration of Nigeria's first democratically elected president in May 1999. Dignitaries from 25 nations traveled to Abuja for the celebration, including Britain's Prince Charles and South Africa's Nelson Mandela. Queen Sheila was there too, and apparently didn't like her seating placement at the formal dinner. So she planted herself in the chair of a prominent Nigerian official and refused to budge.

We also heard from a *Houston Press* writer who thought his paper deserved a bit more credit for its Jackson Lee coverage than the one mention we gave it. He's right. Besides the story we cited, we drew on the *Press*'s terrific reporting on the congresswoman's squabbles with Continental Airlines, credit for which was mistakenly removed by an editor. Indeed, Jackson Lee's hometown weekly is a trove of reporting on Jackson Lee, this week unveiling her own Enron connection.

"Sheila Jackson Lee," write Brian Wallstin and Tim Fleck, "arguably the most liberal member of Congress and inarguably the most vocal, became a Ken Lay 'project' in her upstart 1994 race for the 18th District. As her fundraising chairman, Lay rallied the Houston business community to join her against their common foe, incumbent Craig Washington.

"'We all had to give $250 to get rid of Craig,' says a Lay associate. 'But she was a pain in the ass to [Lay].' The source says that after her election, Jackson Lee would call Lay 'two or three times a day trying to get us to hire her cronies for big money.'"

Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, brought to you by Enron. That's another strike against them. ♦

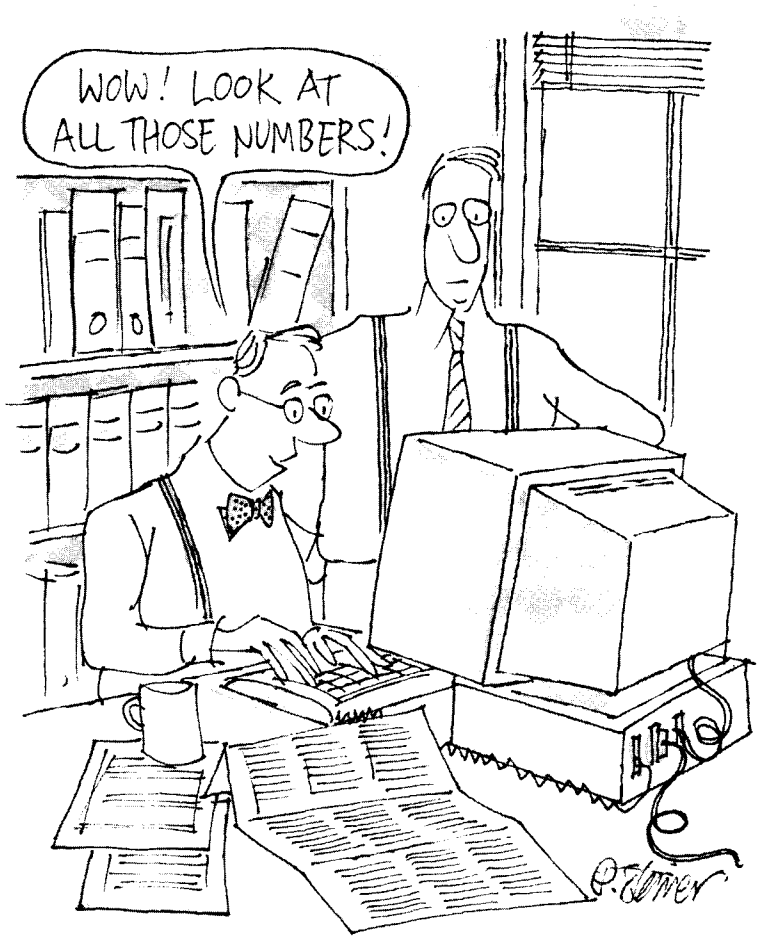
Gold-medal Jerks

Last week, the International Olympic Committee stepped in it when declaring U.S. athletes couldn't carry the tattered American flag recovered from the World Trade Center during the parade of nations. After an outpouring of protest, the IOC said the flag could be shown during the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner. Still, many complained that the IOC had been hijacked by a bunch of tone-deaf, internationalist jerks. THE SCRAPBOOK couldn't disagree more. Anyone who follows the IOC knows it has *always* been populated by tone-deaf, internationalist jerks.

The IOC claimed its flag decision was simply an effort to avoid political statement-making by the home country. But the IOC has a history of looking the other way when such statements are being made, especially by despots. The IOC wasn't bothered after granting the 1936 Olympics to Berlin, when Adolf Hitler admitted it was his finest propaganda coup, even as he forbade Jewish athletes to compete for Germany and put signs around sporting arenas saying "Dogs and Jews not permitted in the toilets." Nor did they blink in 1972 when Palestinian terrorists killed 11 Jewish athletes and coaches. "The games must go on," said IOC honcho Avery Brundage. (And indeed they have, every four years without a single moment of silence for the murdered Israeli athletes, even though their relatives requested one.) When North Korea threw a fit about not getting to co-host the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, then-IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch (a former sports minister in the fascist Franco regime) offered to let them host five events.

Most gallingly, the IOC last year granted Beijing hosting rights for the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



NEO-ACCOUNTING

2008 Olympics. This despite the fact that China had just executed 1,800 prisoners in three months, had tortured members of the Falun Gong movement, and had sent thugs to beat up a photographer who took pictures of a ticket-scalper at an event promoting China's Olympic campaign. As *Investor's Business Daily* commented at the time, "One wonders what exactly a rogue regime would have to do to lose a bid for the Games. Shoot an IOC official?"

When the *Guardian* recently asked current IOC president Jacques Rogge of Belgium if, since World Cup officials had asked host-country South Korea to ban the locals from eating dogs, might it not be a swell idea for the IOC to suggest China stop killing humans, Rogge replied, "It is not the job of the IOC to interfere with the internal workings of any of its members' political systems." Unless, of course, it's the United States, which the IOC asked to declare a cease-fire in Afghanistan during the Olympics (the White House refused).

If you're picking up a whiff of IOC anti-Americanism, it's not your imagination. The committee, which *Slate* nicely summed up as being comprised of "fascist symps, avaricious Third World functionaries, and inbred royals," has micro-managed American athletes down to insisting that a U.S. luge team member remove a 1 inch by 4 inch September 11 memorial sticker from a sled. And according to the *Los Angeles Times*'s Alan Abrahamson, who obtained minutes from IOC meetings, Rogge once advised Samaranch not to appear at a United States congressional inquiry into the Salt Lake City bribery scandal by quoting a 17th-century French proverb: "The spittle of toads never reaches the light of the stars."

So excuse us for gagging when the complaints start up about American patriotism infecting the games. ♦

Bilingual Backlash

The indefatigable Ron Unz—author of Prop 227, which ended bilingual education for California students (except those with parents misguided enough to insist on it)—points out some amazing statistics to THE SCRAPBOOK. The state's testing of second grade students shows that students with limited-English proficiency who are now taught in English-only classes are vastly outperforming those languishing in the vestigial bilingual programs. For instance, 28 percent of the mainstreamed students score above the 50th percentile on the reading test, while only 13 percent of their peers consigned to bilingual classrooms do so.

The achievement gap in favor of the students liberated by Prop 227 is so glaring that it should qualify as malpractice that any bilingual classrooms have survived. So how has Gov. Gray Davis's state board of education greeted the good news? Well, behind the scenes they're trying to undo it. Among the regulations they're mulling to subvert the law, the most outrageous would give bilingual teachers (as opposed to the kids' parents) the authority to assign students to their classrooms. Or perhaps we should say "condemn" children to their classrooms. Which part of the voters' "no" didn't they understand? ♦

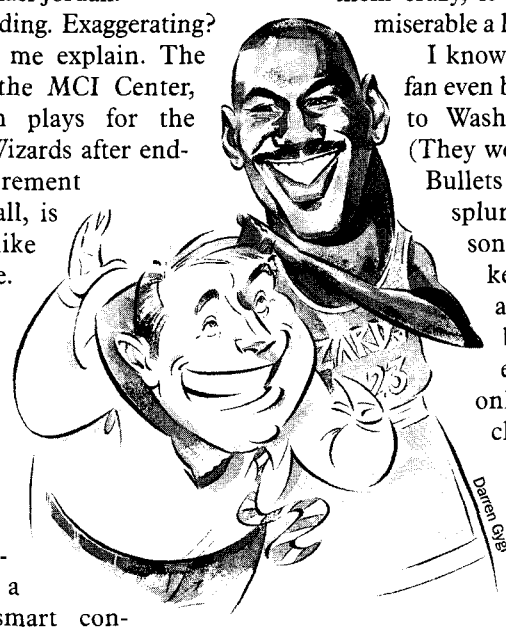
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Casual

Off to See the Wizards

Where there was economic stagnation, now there's prosperity. Where there was weakness in confronting rivals, there's strength and cunning. Where there was a moral swamp, there's a return to family values. And my quality of life is a lot better, too. Who has produced all this? You probably expect me to say President Bush. Wrong. The answer is Michael Jordan.

I'm not kidding. Exaggerating? Sure. But let me explain. The area around the MCI Center, where Jordan plays for the Washington Wizards after ending his retirement from basketball, is booming like never before. The basketball team, a pathetic bunch of journeymen, role players, and malcontents in recent years, is transformed into a tough and smart contender with Jordan on the court.



As for family values, remember that Jordan's wife Juanita filed for divorce a few weeks ago. It was a downer for fans who admire Jordan as a personality and leader in the sports establishment as well as a player. The suit prompted William Raspberry, the influential columnist for the *Washington Post*, to urge, in print, that Jordan and his wife reconcile. "Michael is a role model for millions of the young and not-so-young," Raspberry wrote. "It would be powerful if he would say (either publicly or by his behavior) marriage can be tough, but it's important, worth some significant sacrifice, some trying again." By reconciling, by their behavior, the Jordans did exactly that.

Now to my quality of life. I suspect readers know many Americans spend an inordinate amount of their discretionary time attending athletic events or watching them on television. Most of them don't take an above-the-fray, aesthetic view of sports. They root for specific teams. And while rooting for a perennially bad team may not drive them crazy, it does make them miserable a lot of the time.

I know. I was a Wizards fan even before they moved to Washington in 1974. (They were the Baltimore Bullets then.) Anyway, I splurged and got season tickets and have kept them year after year. It hasn't been a pleasant experience. The only time the franchise won the National Basketball Association championship was in 1977-78, the year I had a sabbatical from journalism and was out of town.

Since then, the team has bounced between being mediocre and merely lousy. At least there was never a letdown. The only time recently when visions of another championship danced in the heads of fans like me was when two former University of Michigan stars, Juwan Howard and Chris Webber, showed up. They are great players, but it didn't work out. Both have been traded to other teams.

The low point was last season. It's literally true that you couldn't give Wizards tickets away. People would come up with the darnedest excuses to avoid going to a game. A young man who loves basketball said no because of an urgent need to clean his apartment. Others suddenly recalled they had visitors arriving from the hinterland. And so on. One hundred dollar seats and you couldn't get rid of them. I don't blame the refuseniks, though. The team was bad and boring. Its point guard not only got arrested several times, but he also was famous for barfing while sitting on the bench during a game.

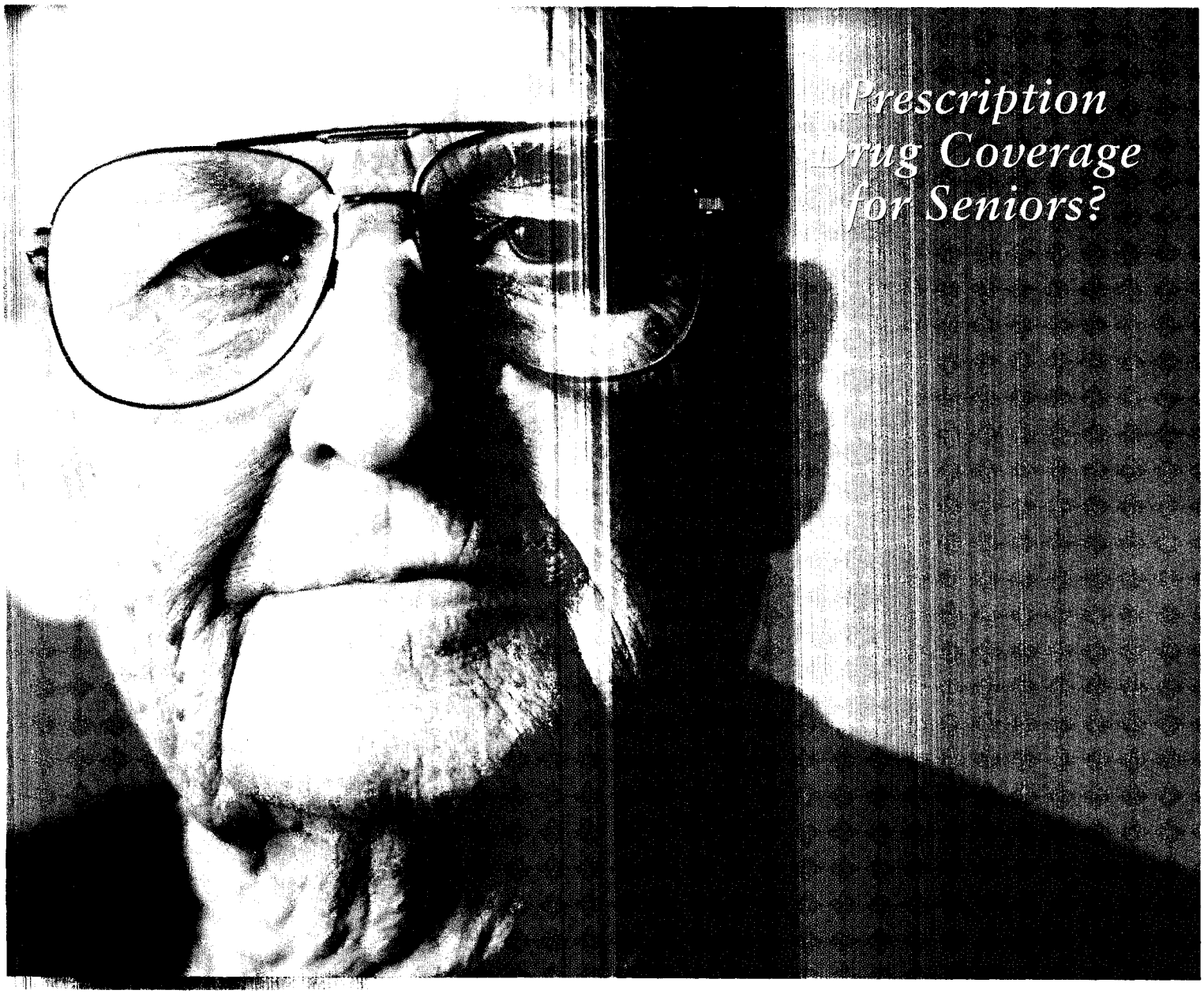
Wizards-avoidance also extended to my family. My son Freddy, quite a sports fan in his own right, didn't bother with an excuse. He just said no way. As an alternative, he developed a fanatical interest in pro hockey, the Pittsburgh Penguins in particular. This was motivated, I guess, partly because hockey's exciting, partly because he was given a stick once used by Mario Lemieux, and partly to erect a wall of separation from the Wizards. Who could blame him?

Now, with Jordan on board, all that has changed. Turn down tickets? Never happens. Not a day goes by when someone doesn't say they'd love to go to a Wizards game with me or without me. But since my family has first claim, the tickets aren't available very often. My daughters want to go, all three of them. Freddy doesn't want to miss a game. My wife Barbara, whose interest in the team waned when Earl (the Pearl) Monroe left eons ago, is pleased to join me. So I don't have to go alone anymore to see the Wizards.

But it's the games themselves that are mainly responsible for my enhanced quality of life. After an early losing streak, the Wizards are now winners. Jordan has molded them into a thrilling team in which every player has a role. They're fun to watch. The games are totally absorbing. There's no more despair afterwards. If the Wizards have won, there's exhilaration and plenty to talk about. If they've lost, there's a reasonable expectation they'll win the next game, and go to the playoffs and perhaps to the NBA championship, and be an enduring source of happiness for me and thousands of others. Thanks, Mike.

Fred Barnes

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



It Can Be Done...

It Should Be Done

As Congress renews the debate over prescription drug coverage for American seniors, we reaffirm our support for creating a meaningful coverage benefit.

What is the measure of a meaningful benefit?

It must provide "choice" ... fully assist the poorest seniors ... spur competition ... include access to all medicines ... foster, not frustrate, drug research ... and permit those seniors who already have drug coverage — to keep it.

Prescription drug coverage for seniors? It can be done ... It should be done!

PhRMA

Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America

New Medicines. New Hope.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I've Been Good to Her

Doris Kearns Goodwin's 1993 statement to the *Boston Globe* in which she alleges that I under-cited her work is not only regrettable, but erroneous. As documented by Bo Crader, Goodwin said at the time that "[McGinniss] just uses it flat out, without saying that it came from my work" ("A Historian and Her Sources," Jan. 28).

I respect and admire Doris Kearns Goodwin and her work. She was extremely gracious and helpful to me during the period when I was doing research for *The Last Brother*. She met with me personally to offer suggestions and advice.

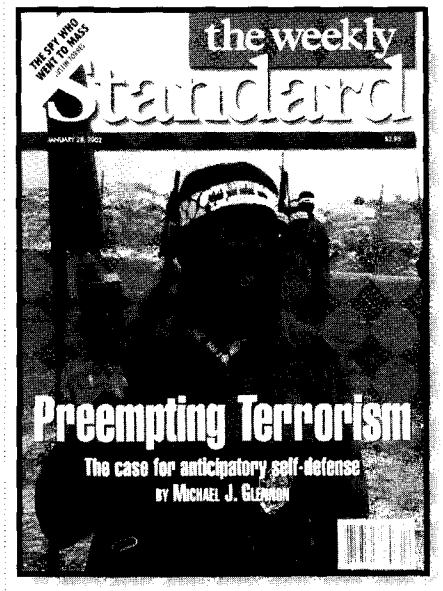
It has always seemed to me that her later comments about the book constituted one of the duties she was expected to perform as a member of the Kennedy extended family. At best, her criticism was disingenuous. I fully agree with her about the need to "credit the source," and in *The Last Brother*, I credited her repeatedly.

The Last Brother is not—nor have I ever suggested that it was—a biography of Edward Kennedy. Nor, unlike Doris, do I consider myself a historian. Rather, my book is an interpretation of the arc of Edward Kennedy's public life in the 1960s. Naturally, this involved treatment of his parents, his siblings, his childhood, adolescence, and manhood before John F. Kennedy became president.

The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys was an invaluable source, as I stated in an author's note (published in the original edition of the book, not added later): "Moreover, in almost every instance, the quotations and other facts that form the basis of my interpretations have been drawn from published sources that I believe to be reliable. For example (as should be apparent to any attentive reader), in the section of the book that deals with the assassination of John F. Kennedy, I have relied heavily upon the factual account presented in *The Death of a President*, the book written by historian William Manchester . . . Likewise, for other sections, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* by Doris Kearns Goodwin . . . [was] especially helpful."

I would add—because although Goodwin now says, "I didn't mean it as harshly as it sounded," she has not acknowledged that her complaint about my work was essentially baseless—that I quote from her repeatedly in my text, in each case placing quotation marks around the words used, and crediting her as the source. The quotations begin on page 133, where I attribute the first to "family biographer Doris Kearns Goodwin," and continue with attributions like "as Kearns Goodwin has described," and "Kearns Goodwin has written."

Her work was by no means my only source, as I used the archives of the *Boston Globe* and other material, none of it dependent on Goodwin's work, gathered by two research assistants I employed. In addition, many of the facts



she relates reside in the public domain. Nonetheless, I don't believe anyone could read *The Last Brother* without being aware of my oft-acknowledged debt to her.

Joe McGinniss
Williamstown, MA

Family Values

Harry Stein's "How the Father Figures" (Jan. 28) is an excellent account of John Walker Lindh's upbringing in Marin County, California, and his father's part in his transformation into an Islamic extremist. However, Stein did not mention one very important factor in raising children.

In the Marin County area, parents place a very high value on raising "open-minded" children. Some of my conversations with Californians have led me to believe they think that is more important than anything else.

After an undergraduate education in the University of California system, my husband and I left California. We realized that our children needed an anchor, a bedrock belief system, and concrete guidance more than they needed to be "open-minded." There would be plenty of time for flexibility later, but growing up they needed standards, rules, and guidance. Since they were going to absorb someone's values, we preferred they absorb ours.

My children, who are not much older than John Walker Lindh, both read *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* in high school, but neither of them left their Catholic high school to pursue an alternative education. Both of my children have traveled extensively on their own and with my husband and me and have learned other languages.

I believe Marilyn Walker and John Lindh love their son, but they did not give him the next most important lesson in his upbringing. John Walker Lindh was searching for stability, a belief system, and his parents left him adrift to find his own way. The way he chose has rigid rules for every aspect of life. Perhaps if the parents had had more input rather than allowing him to drift without an anchor, they would not be facing such heartache and their son would not be facing life in prison or worse.

Anne Gomes
Guatemala City, Guatemala

I Spy

It was a pleasure to read a more balanced portrayal of the Catholic organization Opus Dei than one usually gets ("The Spy Who Went to Mass," Jan. 28). Though I am affiliated in no way with the organization, I admire it and am impressed with the sensitivity and respect with which Justin Torres treats it.

One paragraph is extremely unfair, however, in a way that ought to be addressed. Torres reports that Robert Hanssen confessed espionage to an Opus

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our Jobs Depend on Strong 201 Trade Relief for America's Steel Industry.

The U.S. Department of Commerce calls it "the thirty-year history of repeated unfair trade actions. . . ." Foreign countries dump their subsidized steel in U.S. markets. It destroys American jobs and devastates communities. ■ Since 1998 alone, 29 steel companies have gone bankrupt and over 23,000 workers have lost their jobs. ■ The International Trade Commission ruled that surging imports have seriously injured the US steel industry. ■ It's time to level the playing field for American steel workers. Under Section 201 of the Trade Act of 1974, the President can institute a strong remedy that gives workers in America's steel companies a fair chance to compete. ■ Urge the President to implement strong 201 trade relief.

MINIMILL 201 COALITION

Representing America's 21st Century Steel Companies

SUPPORT STRONG 201 TRADE RELIEF.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dei priest and was given a light penance. It then questions the prudence of the priest and calls his instructions to the penitent "laughably naive."

One problem: As the article mentions, a Catholic priest "cannot reveal the contents of the confessional." Only the priest and Hanssen know what the penance given in that confessional was. Only Hanssen can say anything about it. To criticize the priest's penance on Hanssen's say-so is to take a double agent's word at face value, and to assume that a highly trained priest with a deeply moral spirituality shrugged off a sin of almost Judas-like severity. Talk about naive.

TOM HOOPES
Executive Editor
National Catholic Register
North Haven, CT

JUSTIN TORRES is partially off the mark in his review of three recent books on the spy Robert Hanssen. Citing the books, Torres points to an arrogant FBI culture that could not believe one of its own could go bad; therefore Hanssen was never given a polygraph test.

I was an FBI agent from 1987-96, working in foreign counterintelligence for much of that time (I never met Hanssen). Because my work was sensitive, I was given a routine polygraph, as were many of my colleagues. Solely as a result of the polygraph, the FBI falsely accused me of espionage. A massive investigation ensued—24-hour surveillance by car and airplane, lengthy interrogations of my family, a consent search of my home, and other intrusions into my life. Nearly two years later, the FBI gave me a grudging exoneration. My career undermined, I resigned immediately.

Torres and the authors he reviews equate conducting polygraphs with national security. A polygraph has never caught a spy. It is fundamentally dependent on trickery, easily defeated by countermeasures in which we should expect any spy to be practiced. Trying to identify an actual spy from within a population who "failed" their polygraphs, if he "failed," renders such a screening exercise impracticable. One might with more justification investigate all those who "passed" the polygraph, since a spy is more likely to appear in that group. Aldrich Ames passed his CIA polygraphs with primitive countermeasures. Double agents from Cuban intelligence routed the CIA in the 1980s by passing polygraphs. Larry Wu Tai Chin, a convicted spy formerly with the CIA, passed his polygraph. Belief in the polygraph has been a costly delusion.

Torres also chides the FBI and others for not recognizing in Hanssen signs betraying a troubled personality. This is of course easier in hindsight, although the FBI's failure to act on his brother-in-law's information was egregious. Nevertheless, I do not wish to see national security hinge on the perceptiveness of those in contact with people accessing classified information. Self-absorption and denial are, alas, too powerful.

What the Russians understand that we don't is that the best way to catch a spy is to recruit one from the other side.

MARK MALLAH
San Francisco, CA

JUSTIN TORRES's piece on Robert Hanssen was a thoughtful review of a number of books on the subject, and he raises some interesting questions: above all, "how could someone lead a double life of the sort that Hanssen did?" It's unfortunate that, after a very accurate account of Opus Dei early in the article, Torres ends by criticizing it. Its members did not recognize Hanssen's "torment," he says, because they "do not fully fit in this world" and are too concerned with converting others to learn from them, e.g., from the FBI people who referred to Hanssen as "Dr. Death" because of his dour demeanor.

But should people in Opus Dei go around asking people outside the Work, such as Hanssen's professional colleagues at the FBI, how other members act? Of course not. Is it possible that Hanssen acted differently at work and at spiritual formation activities? Not only possible, but likely.

Is it possible that Hanssen was simply very adept at living different sides of his life selectively, presenting himself in different ways according to his audience? We know he did that well—he fooled just about everybody.

There's no reason to impute a fault to members of Opus Dei that Torres acknowledges goes directly contrary to its spirit. People in Opus Dei, like everyone else, recognize both good and bad in the world, and are happy to learn from others. In the same way, Pope John Paul II (for whom they have great affection) is an acute critic of some aspects of modern thought, though he has drawn a great deal from it. To assume that there must be some connection between Hanssen's faults and his involvement with Opus Dei is neither warranted nor fair.

CHRISTOPHER WOLFE
Marquette University
Milwaukee, WI

FARMER BARNES

I GENERALLY ENJOY Fred Barnes's commentary in THE WEEKLY STANDARD. However, I find surprising his arguments against the new farm bill ("Farmer Daschle," Jan. 28).

Although I dislike the bill for other reasons, I think Barnes's rationale for opposing it, as outlined in his editorial, is flawed. He uses the same rhetoric the Left uses to decry tax cuts. "Two-thirds of the subsidies go to 10 percent of America's farmers." That sounds an awful lot like "Two-thirds of all tax cuts go to the wealthiest 10 percent of all taxpayers." While I do not have the figures, I would bet that the wealthiest 10 percent of farmers produce somewhere around two-thirds of all U.S. crops.

TOM REEVES
Montevideo, MN

• • •

THE WEEKLY STANDARD
welcomes letters to the editor.
Letters will be edited for length and clarity and must include the writer's name, address, and phone number.
All letters should be addressed:
Correspondence Editor
THE WEEKLY STANDARD
1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505
Washington, DC 20036.

You may also fax letters: (202) 293-4901
or e-mail: editor@weeklystandard.com.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

No Medals for Title IX

In February 1998, after an American team won the first Olympic gold medal ever awarded for women's hockey, there was a brief rainshower of patronizing media coverage, as is customary in such matters. Weren't they a great bunch of gals? And didn't they really *deserve* it? And—forget about them—didn't the rest of us deserve it even more, since it was our Congress that had passed that Title IX thing back in '72, finally forcing colleges to offer our women some serious varsity-level sports programs? And so on and so forth, blah, blah, blah.

A.J. Mleczko, the U.S. hockey squad's star defensewoman, thought all this attention was "wonderful," of course. But she also found the self-congratulatory spin everyone was putting on her team's triumph more than slightly weird. So far as Mleczko could tell, they'd come a long way, baby, pretty much entirely by themselves. And virtually unnoticed: "People say they love watching us play, and all we can ask is, 'How is that possible? Where'd you see us?'" Face it, Mleczko told the *Washington Post*, "Women's hockey has grown up in the dark."

None of the U.S. women has ever played hockey on a single team that owed even the slightest part of its existence to Title IX.

Almost without exception, Mleczko and her teammates had each learned to play hockey as the only girl on the ice—and had been taunted for it. More than one of them had never so much as seen another female hockey player before joining the national program. Defensewoman Tara Mounsey, for example, had signed up while still a teenager in 1996, shortly after leading her otherwise all-boy high school team to the state championship, where she'd won top individual honors as the tournament's "Mr. Hockey." To be sure, a fair number of Mounsey's 1998 comedalists *had* previously skated in a full-fledged women's program. But they'd done so with region-wide volunteer youth leagues, or at richly endowed prep schools, or, most importantly, on campuses like the University of New Hampshire and Providence and Harvard. And these were colleges—among a tiny handful across the country—that had been fielding top-flight varsity women's teams for years and years before Title IX was ever enforced.

Come to think of it, none of the women who won an Olympic gold medal in 1998—not one—had ever played hockey on a single team that owed even the slightest part of its existence to Title IX.

Oh, well. It's four years later already and Mleczko and Mounsey are back for a second Olympics, now underway in Salt Lake City, Utah. Their U.S. team has entered the competition on an astonishing 31-game winning streak, during which they've outscored their opponents by a combined 252 to 28. Most observers expect them to earn a repeat gold medal when the hockey final is played this Thursday. Many people are calling them the most dominant team, male or female, in the history of the sport.

And yet it remains the case, despite turnover at 11 of 25 roster spots since 1998, that none of the U.S. women has ever played hockey on a single team that owed even the slightest part of its existence to Title IX.

Do you suppose any of the NBC announcers or morning-paper sportswriters will take note of this detail? Neither do we. We suppose, instead, that our women's hockey Olympians, should they sweep through the games the way they're supposed to, will be advanced as proof—along with Brandi Chastain's legendary Nike-brand brassiere—that Title IX, at long last and all for the better, has permanently remade the gender map of American sports. In its application to a particular women's hockey team, this interpretation of events will be false and thus will cheat some genuinely peerless athletes of the full credit their accomplishment is due. By its application to life in general, however, this latest outburst of halfwit boosterism for Title IX will be falser and more damaging still.

For that law has become an outright pestilence. It has made millions of dollars in fees for attorneys representing a few dozen undergraduate plaintiffs. But it has made only

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a negligible contribution to the overall growth of women's sports at American universities. And in the process, Title IX has forced hundreds of schools to mothball decades-old team and Olympic-specialty programs, involving tens of thousands of lost varsity roster opportunities—for men.

Needless to say, this is not what Congress intended in 1972 when it banned discrimination "on the basis of sex" in the administration of educational programs receiving federal financial assistance. It would be sixteen years before legislative amendments made clear that the ban extended to indirect aid beneficiaries like college athletics departments. And it wasn't until 1992 that meaningful legal activity to enforce the ban became possible—after the Supreme Court ruled that Title IX authorized private-party litigation and large, monetary damage awards. But all along, one key part of the law's text remained unchanged. And, you would think, unambiguous. "Nothing" in Title IX, this provision warned, "shall be interpreted to require . . . preferential or disparate treatment" in any college program purely on the basis of statistical notions about how many men and women "ought" to be participating.

The same language is nominally in force even today. But as these pages have taken pains to recount in the past, it has been rendered a practical nullity. The federal courts have been hearing sports-related Title IX lawsuits for ten years now. And for ten years now—inexplicably bending to a Clinton administration "clarification" of a Carter administration "interpretation" of original legislation that plainly *bars* the use of quotas—the federal courts have been ruling that Title IX is . . . a quota, simple as that. In all but the rarest circumstances, so says this case law, a college runs afoul of Title IX any time it fails to distribute athletic opportunities to men and women in proportions closely mirroring the undergraduate population at large. That the school may be having difficulty finding enough students to play on the women's teams it already sponsors is no excuse. "Society has conditioned women to expect less than their fair share," according to the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, a problem the Ninth Circuit "presumes" can best be remedied by offering women more than they want.

And what if they just won't take it? What if, on the questionnaire appended to each year's college-entrance SAT, men's expressed interest in varsity athletics continues to be three times higher than women's? In that case, advises the Seventh U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, it would be "extremely prudent" for university administrators to comply with Title IX the horrible but easy way: by canceling one or more of their traditional—and fully subscribed—varsity programs for men.

Which is exactly what they've been doing; it's been a bloodbath these past few years. Baseball programs are dying left and right. Certain Olympic specialties for men, wrestling and gymnastics in particular, are approaching extinction. Most Division I schools already offer a wider range of sports to women than to men. Women's teams already outnumber men's in the vast majority of NCAA-sanctioned sports—and absorb a notably outsized share of available scholarship money. We're already at the point where, adjusted for population growth, significantly fewer men now play American college sports than at any time in the past twenty years, simply because they're not being allowed to. And *still* there are "too many" active jockstraps nationwide, largely because "too many" schools refuse to let go of their 100-man football rosters. So the carnage will likely continue.

A little-noticed plank in the 2000 Republican platform called for "a reasonable approach to Title IX that seeks to expand opportunities for women without adversely affecting men's teams." The Bush administration could realize any such reform unilaterally, of course, by rewriting the law's enforcement rules. But even were they inclined to try, which is doubtful, there'd be no one at the relevant Education Department branch to do the work; Gerald Reynolds, the president's Office for Civil Rights nominee, has been denied a confirmation hearing by Sen. Kennedy of Massachusetts, who takes instruction on such questions from Title IX's fiercely ideological "gender equity" lobby.

And Kennedy's successful obstruction of Reynolds is probably an accurate measure of congressional feeling generally. Speaker of the House Denny Hastert, a former wrestling coach himself, would dearly love to take a corrective crack at Title IX's underlying text. But he knows his colleagues are cowed—what with Brandi Chastain's brassiere and all. "It's a long hard sell," Hastert acknowledges. Doesn't sound like he ever expects to close the deal.

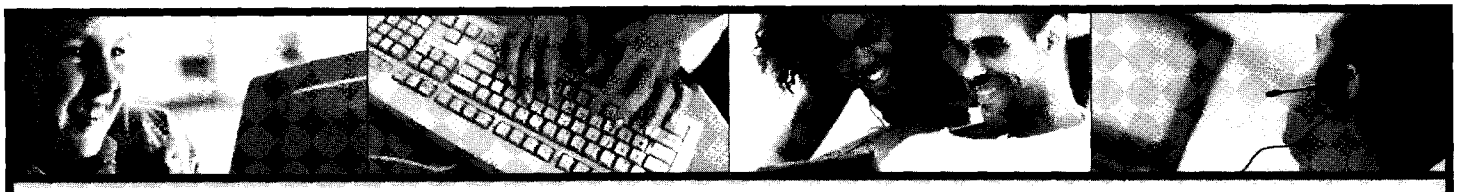
That would seem to leave only the courts, whose unbroken record of abysmal rulings on the subject is somewhat less than encouraging. Last month the National Wrestling Coaches' Association filed a federal district court lawsuit in Washington arguing, among other things, that Title IX's current implementing regulations should be declared void by virtue of procedural irregularities in their adoption. We think they're right about that. We hope they win, though it's a longshot. We hope they win and are upheld at the Circuit Court level. We hope they're upheld at the Circuit Court level and the Supreme Court then agrees to hear the case and winds up invalidating an entire decade of disastrous Title IX precedents.

The bad news is that even this rosiest of scenarios will take years to play out. By which point—unless Congress or the White House should find the courage to intervene on behalf of justice and sanity—men's college athletics may well be crippled beyond near-term repair.

In any case, there'll be good news, too: Come what may, serious women athletes in America, like A.J. Mleczko and her Olympic hockey colleagues, will unquestionably continue to flourish. Just as they would have had Title IX never been born.

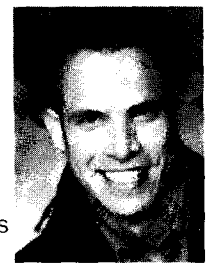
—David Tell, for the Editors

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



STANDING AT A DIGITAL CROSSROADS

by Omar Wasow, executive director of BlackPlanet.com



As the new century unfolds, African-American small business owners have a critical decision to make. We can stand by and watch a tidal wave of innovation propel the rest of the business world forward, or we can catch that wave and share equally in the remarkable advances and rewards that these magical technologies have enabled.

For many non-ethnic small businesses, taking advantage of this revolution is obvious and necessary. Yet, as a small business owner and someone who regularly works with hundreds of African-American small business people, I see many of my peers more comfortable running their businesses the old-fashioned way.

Of the 800,000 African-American small businesses, 90 percent are typically mom-and-pop operations and have strong family-centric, often outdated ways of doing business. The owners largely serve their local community, and their day-to-day focus is on making a sale, not on building an infrastructure for the future.

The issue isn't *access* to technology. It's that African-American small businesses, which are largely service oriented, don't automatically see the value of technology as a strategic business tool. In addition, African-American entrepreneurs typically have not pursued technical studies in school that would give them the knowledge base or comfort level they need to embrace high-tech business solutions.

To underscore this point, fewer than 2 percent of African-American small business owners currently have e-commerce plans, compared to 35 percent of non-ethnic small businesses.

I'm often asked by my peers why a minority small business owner should integrate technology into their operations. My response is that technology and the Internet have become an indispensable part of our economy, and will be even more essential to business success in what Bill Gates calls the Digital Decade ahead. Whether it's using e-mail for marketing and customer service, an intranet for collaborating with partners, or larger scale e-commerce operations like we deploy in my business, technology offers incredible benefits in terms of productivity, efficiency and business agility.

There's another reason why we should all embrace technology. According to the most recent census data available, African-American small businesses experienced a record $43 billion in annual sales, and the number of African-American businesses grew four times faster than other businesses. While this is great news, it's crucial that the burgeoning universe of minority small businesses embraces the strategic use of technology if it is going to stay competitive in the fast-paced, dynamic digital economy.

There is a great opportunity for the technology industry to reach out to the minority small business owner. Over the past year, for example, the Microsoft Build Your Business Tour has reached more than 40,000 African-American small business owners in seven cities, providing free seminars on ways they can integrate technology into their businesses. Microsoft is also the primary sponsor of The Blacks in Technology Summit, a series of two-day summits in four cities that bring key issues of technology to the African-American community.

While these are important efforts, there's more that can and must be done to reduce the business divide. From the industry side, this includes a deeper understanding of the needs of African-American small businesses, and recognition that they, and indeed the broader universe of minority small businesses, are a significant customer base. For the African-American small business community, it's important that we take the time—and make the investment—to build a technology base that will ensure our success into the future.

Through the cooperative effort of the minority business community and the high-tech industry, we have an opportunity to ensure that everyone shares in the promise and potential of the Digital Decade.

One in a series of essays on technology and its impact on society sponsored by Microsoft.
More information is available at microsoft.com/issues.

Microsoft

© 2002 Microsoft Corporation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Borking Judge Pickering

It's open season among Senate Democrats on Bush's judicial nominees. BY TERRY EASTLAND

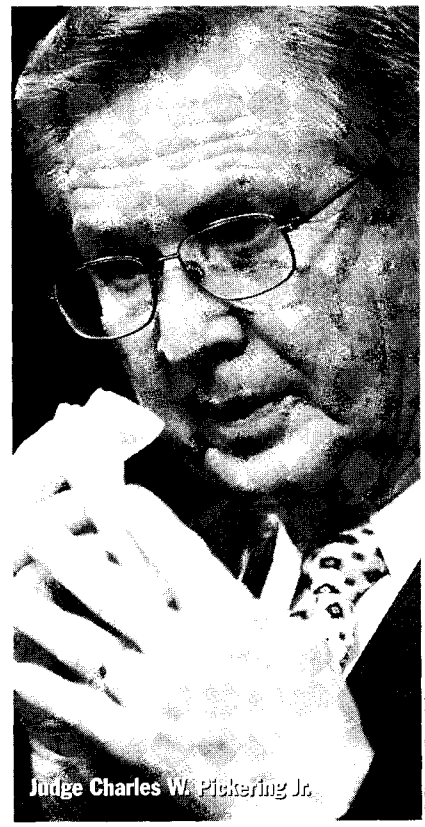
WHEN JIM JEFFORDS left the Republican party last May and became an independent, Democrats gained control of the Senate. By a single vote, yes, but what a difference that margin makes, especially when it comes to appointing judges.

Consider the case of Charles Pickering, for twelve years a U.S. District Judge in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Last year George W. Bush designated him for the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. On October 18, Pickering (rated "well qualified" by the American Bar Association) went before the Senate Judiciary Committee. Had Republicans still controlled the Senate, he would have been easily confirmed. But the one hearing wasn't enough for Judiciary Committee Democrats. Pickering returned last week for a second hearing—more nearly an inquisition. Whether Pickering is ultimately confirmed or not, the Democrats made clear how they intend to deal with Bush nominees they target for possible defeat. Attack their life, attack their work, attack both if you can, and don't let evidence get in the way.

Last week's hearing moved back and forth between Pickering's career before he became a judge and his tenure on the bench. Pickering was in private practice before becoming a county prosecutor and then a state senator. The Democrats' inquiry into statements and actions of his during those distant days sought to paint him as unsympathetic to claims of black equality, even a segregationist at heart.

Terry Eastland is publisher of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

The Democrats read more into some events than the facts could reasonably bear. Yet Pickering found himself repenting of his 1964 statement that the national Democratic party had "humiliated" the people of Mississippi in the way it had treated



Judge Charles W. Pickering Jr.

AP Photos: Terry Ashe

the state party, then insistently segregationist. Asked whether he regretted saying that, Pickering, who became a Republican that year, replied, "I do." On another matter—a seemingly innocuous contact in 1973 with the pro-segregationist Mississippi Sovereignty Commission—Pickering also wished that it was not on his record: "If I were making that decision today, I would not do it," he said.

Those acts of repentance didn't seem to impress the Democrats. Nor did evidence portraying Pickering as an exemplary figure during Mississippi's stormy civil rights era. Republican senators reviewed how in 1967 Pickering, a locally elected prosecutor, testified in open court against Sam Bowers, the imperial wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, who was being tried for the firebombing death of civil rights leader Vernon Dahmers. Later, Pickering was turned out of office. During his testimony Pickering attributed that outcome at least in part to the fact he had taken the stand against Bowers. Citing Pickering's testimony against Bowers and other actions he had taken that helped move Mississippi away from its discriminatory past, Sen. Mitch McConnell lauded Pickering for his "moral courage." But that was a point no Democrat was heard to second.

The Democrats expressed apparent interest in Pickering's approach to judging. Pickering distinguished between his personal and political views and the law, stating that as a judge he was duty-bound to follow the latter. He added that as a district judge he was bound by the decisions of the Fifth Circuit and the Supreme Court, whether he agreed with them or not. He further added that as an appellate judge he would be similarly bound.

These routine positions didn't satisfy the Democrats. Nor does it seem possible that they could have. At times the Democrats said they wanted judges who adhered to decisions by courts above. At other times they implied they wanted judges who would dissent from such decisions. Dianne Feinstein, for example, described the Fifth Circuit as "a trailblazer in protecting individual rights." But she lamented that it was no longer that, a point more bluntly made by Democratic colleagues who called it a "very conservative" court. Did she mean to say that the decisions of such a court shouldn't be followed? Likewise, Charles Schumer

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

decried an "era of unprecedented judicial activism" wrought, though he did not say so, by Supreme Court appointees of Republican presidents. Did he mean to say that judges on the courts of appeals should defy the Supreme Court's decisions? To his credit, Pickering declined to embrace the lawless approach to judging suggested by his Democratic interrogators.

During her turn, Maria Cantwell inquired about Pickering's views on the "right of privacy," by which she really meant the abortion right. Pickering said that he "would follow what the Court has said" about the privacy right, which was first announced in a 1965 case, *Griswold* v. *Connecticut*. Cantwell noted that he, Pickering, didn't say that he personally believed that. Pickering replied that he would follow the Court's precedents. To which Cantwell responded: "Do you recognize it in the Constitution?" Said Pickering, "I see it because the Court has said it is there." Cantwell was unsatisfied, as were other Democrats. It appears that they want judges who personally believe not merely that the Constitution contains an unenumerated right of privacy but that this right encompasses the abortion right declared by the Court in the 1973 case of *Roe* v. *Wade*. Judges nominated by a Democratic president would doubtless personally believe all of these things—and more.

Pickering's confirmation chances seemed slim at week's close. Thanks to Jeffords, the committee now has 10 Democrats and 9 Republicans, and it takes 10 votes to get out of committee. Herb Kohl was the one Democrat who failed to make it to the hearing, and there was some speculation after the hearing that Pickering's friend and sponsor, Trent Lott, had struck some sort of deal with Kohl in which the Wisconsin Democrat would vote for Pickering in committee and also on the floor. If so, Pickering just might make it onto the Fifth Circuit. In any case, his hearing is a reliable indicator of the nasty confirmation battles that lie ahead. ♦

My Fellow Lefties . . .

Stop it with the America-bashing.

BY MICHAEL H. SHUMAN

THE REV. JESSE JACKSON says that an eagle can only soar with two wings. But what if one wing refuses to fly? From September 12 onwards, the left-leaning press—magazines like the *Nation* and the *Progressive* and alternative newspapers like the *Village Voice* and the *Bay Guardian*—have fed their readers a steady diet of antiwar opinion. Now that the first phase of the war against terrorism is over, I believe it's time for my fellow lefties to engage in a truly radical activity—serious self-criticism.

The Left's first reaction after the September 11 attacks was to suggest that America was finally getting its just deserts. Bill Blum, an author of anti-CIA books frequently quoted by the undergraduate Left, argued that the terrorist hijackers "had a political purpose: retaliation for decades of military, economic and political oppression imposed upon the Middle East by The American Empire." Similar sentiments were expressed by Noam Chomsky, Susan Sontag, and various British columnists like John Pilger and Robert Fisk.

Even if one is critical of American foreign policy, as I am, the timing and the tone of these comments were obscene, in that they reflected more sympathy for the terrorists than for the victims. Moreover, they suggested that those who seek political change through violence against innocents are entitled to have their demands met—certainly a bizarre position for proponents of nonviolent change.

Michael H. Shuman is the author of Going Local: Creating Self-Reliant Communities in a Global Age, *and was director of the Institute for Policy Studies from 1992 to 1998.*

While the World Trade Center site continued to smolder, a new slogan began to circulate: "Justice, Not Vengeance." This at least had the virtue of not making common cause with Osama bin Laden. Yet, the formula was intended to suggest that any use of force was tantamount to revenge and therefore unjustified.

By "justice," the Left meant that the United States should employ diplomatic tools, such as the World Court or an embargo, to press the Taliban to hand over the al Qaeda fighters. But this suggestion ignored the fact that bin Laden was moving ahead with his publicly declared war against the infidel United States, and that we were—and are—in a race to stop him or else become victims of his next biological, chemical, or nuclear attack.

Nine out of ten Americans wanted justice another way: through use of force to capture and justly punish the al Qaeda perpetrators. Progressives, who were so unwilling to condemn the use of force by terrorists, were eager to condemn any use by the victims, before a single shot was even fired. This was, again, a slap at the American people. Most Americans didn't want revenge. Indeed, strikingly little popular anger poured onto Main Street, and every responsible opinion leader, Democrat and Republican alike, condemned attacks on Arab Americans.

Contrary to predictions from leftist skeptics, the Bush administration did not respond immediately with a massive counterstrike. It took several weeks to build its case against bin Laden, to offer the Taliban peaceful ways out, and to construct a loose coalition of nations, including unlikely allies like Pakistan and Russia.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When the bombing started, progressive commentators sounded humanitarian alarms. A halt to U.S. bombing was essential, the argument went, to respect Ramadan and to ensure that millions of Afghans did not starve over the winter. Yet virtually all those progressives making this argument were largely unaware of the desperate plight of Afghan civilians before the war, and have all but dropped the issue since. The position of the Bush administration—that the best way to prevent a humanitarian disaster was to quickly oust the Taliban regime—turned out to be correct.

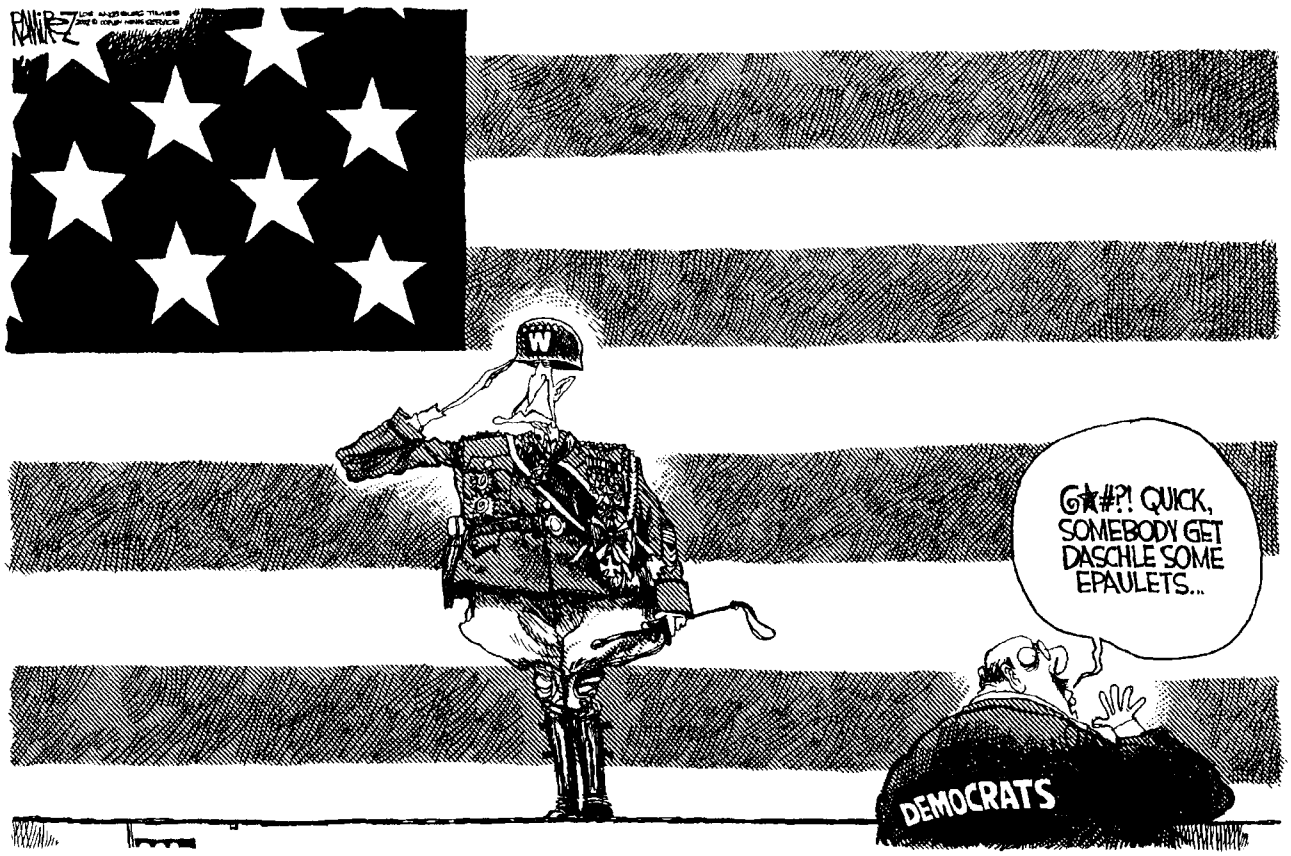
Then progressives shifted arguments once again, this time to decry the civilian casualties from "indiscriminate" use of force by the U.S. military. Currently circulating in progressive Internet listserves is a cut-and-paste catalogue of civilian casualties put together by Professor Marc Herold at the University of New Hampshire, who estimates that more than 3,000 Afghan civilians were killed by the U.S.-led campaign.

While any civilian casualties of war are deplorable, and some of the criticisms of errant U.S. bombing, such as hitting a clearly marked Red Cross warehouse twice, are legitimate, the attempt to draw moral equivalence between the terrorists and U.S. troops is reprehensible. The former intended to kill civilians; the latter didn't. The former intended to perpetrate attacks on U.S. civilians (and still may do so); the latter intended to prevent them. The former increased the chances of civilian deaths by hiding among civilians; the latter sought, however imperfectly, to avoid civilian targets. To ignore these distinctions seems to be but another slap at the victims of September 11.

Not everyone on the left, it needs to be said, has been so irresponsible. Christopher Hitchens branded the Taliban Islamic "fascists" early and often; Richard Falk courageously wrote in the *Nation* that this war was the first in his lifetime that he deemed just. And Todd Gitlin warns poignantly in *Mother Jones* against knee-jerk anti-Americanism.

But the vast majority of progressive opinion leaders were wrong in almost every respect. They ridiculed the evidence pointing to Osama bin Laden. They predicted that American soldiers in Afghanistan would find themselves in a quagmire, unable to dislodge a tough Taliban resistance. They warned that anti-American riots in Pakistan would topple Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf.

Besides this stunning failure of political and strategic analysis, progressives were insensitive to "the people" they claim to champion. The vast majority of women, blacks, Latinos, the elderly, and the poor all understood the purpose and justification of U.S. military action. Only the leadership of the Left confused its hatred of American militarism with the legitimate right—and need—for any nation to engage in self-defense. In doing so, I fear, they have sullied more worthy progressive causes for years to come. ♦



Michael Ramirez

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When Bush Met Sharon

The key visit was the first one.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER Ariel Sharon last week paid his fourth call on the Bush White House. The primary subject of Sharon's visit was the fate and future of Palestinian Authority boss Yasser Arafat. Arafat has been under virtual house arrest in the West Bank since December, a calculated act of public humiliation that Israel undertook with the full acquiescence of the Bush administration. Arafat hasn't been in the White House at all since Bill Clinton's departure, a drastic change for the foreign leader who made more appearances at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue during the previous administration than any other.

The relationship between the United States and Israel has undergone a profound change in the past two months. Israel is no longer counseled by the State Department to show "restraint" in the wake of terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians. Blame for the disastrous state of Israeli-Palestinian relations is placed firmly on Arafat and the Palestinian Authority. In the State of the Union address, the president added the Palestinian terror groups Hezbollah and Hamas to the list of terrorist organizations now considered enemies of the United States.

The ostensible cause of the new American hard line was the effort by the Palestinian Authority to smuggle in 50 tons of weaponry from Iran—including missiles that could bombard Israeli towns—on board the ship *Karine A*. But in the months before Israel's daring January seizure of the ship, Arafat had already poisoned relations with Colin Powell and his personal envoy, Anthony Zinni, by lying about having arranged the arrests of various Palestinian terrorists—who were subsequently killed by Israel while driving freely along West Bank or Gaza roads.

The turn against Arafat has been so sharp, and the tone taken by the United States government has been so wounded, that there were surely other betrayals we don't yet know about.

At its narrowest point, Israel is only nine miles wide. Bush got it. He joked that "most driveways in Texas are longer than that."

Still, the pronounced tilt toward Israel cannot simply be the result of pique or shock at the Palestinian Authority's effort to arm itself to the teeth. The change can be ascribed in part to Bush's own sense of mission following September 11. The Palestinians had been waging a low-level terror war against Israel for almost a year when al Qaeda struck the United States. Bush's growing conviction that terrorism of any sort poses a threat to civilized order around the world simply could not long coexist with a policy of rhetorical evenhandedness between a Western democracy and a terrorist organization masquerading as a legitimate political authority.

But the roots of George W. Bush's determination to side with Israel were planted on December 1, 1998, when the Texas governor was in Israel on his first visit. Ariel Sharon was then foreign minister in the government of Benjamin Netanyahu, and on that day he took Bush and three other Republican governors on a helicopter trip.

The usual highlight of a foreign dignitary's visit to Israel is a long and depressing tour of Yad Vashem, the Jerusalem Holocaust memorial. Israeli politicians have long believed in the magical power of the Yad Vashem visit and its ability to convince ignorant or unaware Americans of the magnitude of Jewish suffering in the last century—and therefore the need for a Jewish state.

But the highlight of George W. Bush's trip was his helicopter ride with Sharon. On the tour, Sharon did not seek to make Israel appealing by stressing Jewish victimization. Instead, by showing Bush and his fellow governors the simple geographical facts of Israel's existence, he made an argument—an argument about the strategic and tactical threats to Israel's Jews at that moment and in the future.

From the air, a powerful lesson in the implacable geography of the Middle East takes only minutes. The Jewish state is so small that at its narrowest point, only nine miles separate the Mediterranean Sea from the West Bank. It's often difficult for Americans to grasp how tiny Israel is, perhaps because a nation that dominates the international news the way Israel does can't help but seem enormous. But Bush, the Texan, got it. As he joked in a speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee in 2000, "most driveways in Texas are longer than that."

Israel's border with Lebanon to the north is constantly under threat from camps controlled by the terrorist group Hezbollah. To the northwest is the border with the ever-hostile Syria. Just beyond Jordan, narrow and weak, are Iran and Iraq, wide and adventurous. Iran pays for Hezbollah's war of menace. The Scud missiles Iraq fired

John Podhoretz is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD *and columnist for the* New York Post.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at Israel traversed all those borders in 12 minutes during the Gulf War.

The proximity of Arab and Jewish population centers makes clear how unsustainable the fantasy of a pure separation between the two peoples is. Much of Israel's water supply flows through the territory that, according to the logic of the Oslo accords, would be part of the state of Palestine.

And the argument that Jerusalem could be easily divided between west and east starts to seem nonsensical when you see Jewish neighborhoods like Gilo and Maale Adumim from the air. They were built on what was Jordanian territory before 1967 and the Palestinians call them "settlements," but comparing them to a redoubt of a few houses atop an empty Judean hill is ludicrous. They are so fully integrated into Jewish Jerusalem that it would be almost inconceivable that they could ever be ceded to the Palestinians.

Bush would not speak to reporters on that trip, but his fellow travelers, future Republican National Committee chairman Marc Racicot and future ambassador to Canada Paul Cellucci, did. They said they were both struck by how small Israel was—and, by extension, how large were the Arab world and population surrounding and abutting the Jewish state.

The relationship forged between Bush and Sharon that day may be one of the most unexpected political friendships of our time, especially given the markedly unsympathetic attitude expressed by the first Bush administration toward the muscular Zionism represented by Sharon. But it's not at all fanciful to believe that Bush's response to the events of September 11 was influenced by what he saw that day on Sharon's helicopter.

America learned on September 11 that there is no safe haven in a dangerous world, not even for a nation bordered east and west by two vast oceans. That had been Sharon's message about Israel's parlous straits three years earlier. No surprise that it would resonate in a sadder and wiser America—and an administration sadder and wiser than its predecessors. ♦

Profiles in Ambivalence

After September 11, Muslim-American groups flinched. BY NOAH D. OPPENHEIM

IN THE DAYS after September 11, mainstream Arab- and Muslim-American community groups condemned the terrorist attacks in the most emphatic terms. Salam Al Marayati, executive director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), recalls, "As citizens we all felt the obligation to seek the culprits behind it. In the sense that the suspects were people of Arab background, it put a special onus on the community."

Now, five months later, that resolve seems to have dissipated. After a flurry of cooperative meetings between the FBI and organizations like MPAC and James Zogby's Arab American Institute, protesting the status of Muslim detainees is the order of the day. Any hope of a dispassionate assessment from within the Muslim community of its possible role in creating a climate hospitable to extremism has been dispelled by a hardening refusal among Muslim-American leaders to acknowledge radical elements within their ranks, and a growing eagerness to place the blame for terrorism on "American foreign policy."

To be sure, MPAC's Al Marayati still encourages his peers to work with law enforcement—pointing out it was the FBI that recently thwarted a Jewish Defense League bomb plot—and it is important, he says, for his community to "root out any criminal elements." But he denies any significant presence of Islamic extremists in the United States. He argues the 9/11 hijackers were "transients," and says some American mosques "present a more conservative approach, but that's their right so long as they don't promote social harm."

This see-no-evil posture fails to acknowledge what goes on in America's mosques. Days after September 11, for example, the imam of New York's Islamic Cultural Center, the city's most prominent mosque, fled to Egypt, where he told a newspaper Jews had hijacked the planes, aided by Zionist air-traffic controllers. Two months later, his successor, Omar Saleem Abous-Namous, still refused to acknowledge Islamic extremists were behind the atrocities, telling one television interviewer, "It is not my job, as a matter of fact, to identify who did it."

Of course, it is not just a question of who did it, but who provided the context that made it appear justifiable to some. Imam Muzammil Siddiqi, director of California's Islamic Society of Orange County, is considered a moderate. In fact, he was invited to speak at the National Cathedral prayer service on September 14. But in October 2000, addressing a rally in support of the terrorist group Hezbollah, he declared, "America has to learn—if you remain on the side of injustice, the wrath of God will come!"

Khaled Abou El Fadl is an Egyptian-born law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, a scholar of Islamic law, and a vocal critic of the Muslim-American establishment (though he defends it in certain instances; he calls Daniel Pipes, Steven Emerson, and Yossef Bodan-

Noah D. Oppenheim wrote about Lawrence Summers and Cornel West in the January 21, 2002, WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

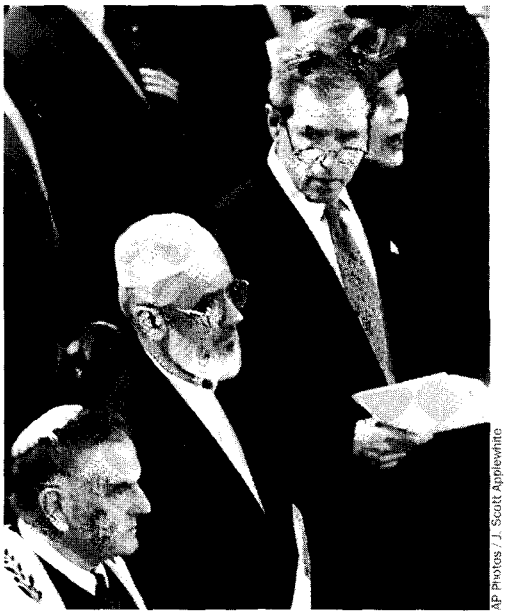
sky "Islamophobics"). He says groups like MPAC and the American Muslim Council are "locked in a paradigm of apologetics and siege mentality." On the question of extremist mosques in America, Abou El Fadl says, "[Muslim-American groups] are either living in an environmental bubble or they know and they don't want to admit it."

Abou El Fadl says that after September 11, the Muslim-American community faced an important challenge: "To engage in introspective processes—to ask, in which ways do certain normative doctrines empower this ugliness?" He explains, "Even if one says this ugliness and extremism are not representative, I do not think that is an adequate response. The fact that white supremacists are not representative does not mean that wider American culture must not ask how the ways we talk, think, behave, help allow these groups to exist." Asked to rate the Muslim-American community on the progress of their self-examination, Abou El Fadl says, "It's been fairly, overall a complete failure."

One task that MPAC and others have been far more willing to take on is a reassessment of "American foreign policy." As early as October, MPAC began running ads on a Los Angeles radio station saying the United States's role in the Middle East had stirred anti-American sentiment. (Those ads were pulled after the radio station was deluged with angry calls.) Of the 13 News Alerts posted on MPAC's website, over half condemn Israel or the Jewish Defense League. (The remainder concern civil liberties and hate crimes.)

Al Marayati says the United States has defined terrorism too narrowly, failing to account for groups like the Tamil Tigers and for Jewish terrorism in the Israeli occupied territories. And he insists it's important to explore what motivates those who follow Osama bin Laden. Al Marayati complains, "We're not able to understand the grievances of the masses that terrorists exploit. If we don't understand that, we'll isolate ourselves—not the terrorists—from the Muslim world."

That many Muslim organizations sympathize with those grievances is no surprise. Further, violent tactics are often characterized as legitimate means of national resistance. In October 2001, the New York executive director of the Council on American Islamic Relations, Al-Haaj Ghazi Khankan, told the newspaper *Jewish Week*, "From a religious point of view, [Palestinians] have the right to defend themselves. . . . Who is a soldier in Israel and who is not? Anyone over 18 is automatically inducted into the service, and they are all reserves. Therefore, Hamas, in my opinion, looks at them as part of the military. Those who are below 18 should not be attacked."



AP Photos / J. Scott Applewhite

Muzammil Siddiqi at the National Cathedral

More subtle, and more common, are efforts to "contextualize" terrorist violence. Abou El Fadl explains this habit of mainstream Muslim-American groups: "They've condemned terrorist acts. But the problem is that they invariably attempt to attach these other causes." After 25 Israelis died in one weekend of suicide bombings, the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee issued the following release: "ADC President Ziad Asali stated that 'This weekend's attacks in Jerusalem and Haifa are morally unjustifiable and politically counter-productive, however, these attacks did not occur in [a] vacuum.' Asali added that 'prolonged Israeli occupation of Palestine and provocative measures taken by the Sharon government to suppress the intifada have directly contributed to this vicious cycle of violence.'"

One consequence of such tactics is a fair amount of moral confusion. Another is reflected in a poll of Muslim Americans recently conducted by John Zogby (James's brother). Presented with a range of military and policy options, respondents were asked, "If you had to choose one of the following ways to wage the war against terrorism, which would you choose?" Sixty-seven percent picked "Changing America's Middle East policy." Only 7 percent picked the next most popular option, "Using U.S. military covert/Special Forces."

If two-thirds of Muslim Americans believe the best way to end extremism is for America to end its support for Israel, then they have little reason to explore other founts from which terrorist ideology might spring—notably certain puritanical and fanatical strains of Islamic thought. Nor can they muster much enthusiasm for a fight they believe is being fought the wrong way.

As America continues to prosecute its campaign against terrorism, Muslim Americans could make a unique contribution, especially in the arena of national security. Abou El Fadl has proposed forming a community task force to assist law enforcement, but reports the idea has been widely rejected by Muslim organizations. It is hard to ignore his conclusion: that, as America confronts this great crisis, "the Muslim-American community's reaction has been defensive, apologetic and largely rhetorical. . . . It has not developed any concrete ways of engaging society, but has united to close ranks and not air any dirty laundry." ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Wreck of the Deutschland

The German economy is in trouble, and so is Gerhard Schröder. BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

Berlin

GERMANY'S Social Democratic chancellor Gerhard Schröder, the first leader to enter office since the country was reunited in 1990, faces reelection in September, and he's in deep trouble. He's in deep trouble because his country isn't as reunited as it looks.

There are, in fact, two Germanies even today, but the frontier that runs between them is economic rather than geographical. The first is the Germany of the *soziale Marktwirtschaft*, the elaborate network of rules contrived by politicians, plutocrats, and unions to maximize wages and (thereby) quell unrest. Perhaps the system's typical product is people like the complacent and visibly well-fed Dieter Schulte, president of the Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund—Germany's equivalent of the AFL-CIO. At an afternoon conference for a delegation of visiting journalists in the Foreign Office in Berlin, Schulte devotes most of two hours to explaining why making the labor market more flexible would be folly for his country.

It's true that the basic package of salary and benefits is now approaching $50 an hour for senior industrial workers, but, given the superb quality of German workmanship, Schulte opines, only a "foolish businessman" would consider that any reason to hire a Polish immigrant, or to engage in deregulation—such as keeping stores open a mere eight hours a day. ("How about customer convenience?" asks one not-with-the-program American journalist? "If he wants to, a customer can generally get to the stores during regular working hours," Schulte replies.) Schulte's constituent unions have taken his message to heart. In early February, IG Metall—one of the four unions whose wage settlements create a domino effect of upward cost-of-living adjustments for all unionized workers in the country—entered salary negotiations demanding a 6.5 percent pay hike.

The second Germany is that of the less formal sector—the one that escapes elaborate regulation. This is the economy of the Pergamon late-night restaurant on Berlin's Friedrichstrasse a block north of Unter den Linden, the Times Square of Central Europe. Over the course of an hour, only one table gets taken—by a party of two. The two patrons between them order a Turkish meat pie, a cheeseburger, an iced tea, a bottle of German beer so large it practically has to be rolled to the table on a hand-truck, two double espressos, and dessert. The bill comes to seven Euros, five dollars and change. Somehow, that's supposed to pay the rent, buy the food, and compensate the four Turkish-looking immigrants who toil there.

Free market dogmatists would say that something's got to give—that the first economy is strangling the second. And the free market dogmatists are being proved right in spades. Germany's growth rate has been at zero in recent months, dead last among the European Union's 15 countries. There is economic contraction in several regions, particularly in rural eastern Germany. The country's half-dozen leading economic think tanks, of all political ideologies, are revising their economic forecasts downward. Last week saw the release of January's unemployment figures. They had been much dreaded, and they turned out to be far worse than anticipated. There were 326,400 new jobless, bringing the total to 4.29 million, and the unemployment rate to 10.4 percent. This news came just as Schröder's Federal Labor Office was revealed to have been falsifying statistics to show vastly more new hiring than is actually going on. Poor Schröder: When he ended Helmut Kohl's 16 years of Christian Democratic Union rule four years ago, it was largely on the strength of a read-my-lips challenge that anyone who cannot bring Germany's jobless tally below 3.5 million deserves to get booted. Now the Christian Democrats are singing that same tune. Across the façade of the CDU party headquarters on the western edge of Berlin's Tiergarten, they have draped a gigantic banner reading, "How many more unemployed, Mr. Schröder?" alongside a tally updated daily.

What's more, in Bavaria's Minister-President Edmund Stoiber, the Christian Democrats have a candidate who plays to the moment. (Stoiber is actually a member of the CDU's Bavarian sister party and permanent ally, the Christian Social Union.) Under Stoiber's stewardship, Bavaria has maintained booming automotive and agricultural sectors, and has led Germany's economy into new sectors such as biotechnology. More important, Bavaria's unemployment rates are not just relatively low by German standards, but low in absolute terms—roughly 5 percent across the state, and under half that in the vicinity of Munich.

Stoiber will also be helped by a record of skepticism towards open immigration. He is not the xenophobe that he's often cast as in the foreign press; during an interview in a Munich restaurant two years ago, he spent more time bragging about the aggressiveness with which Bavaria prosecuted racially motivated hate crimes than he did on his favorite theme of bogus asylum applications.

Christopher Caldwell is a senior editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AP Photo / Jan Bauer

Schroeder's nemesis Edmund Stoiber with Christian Democrat leader Angela Merkel

But with Germany receiving over half of Europe's asylum-seekers, such positions will win votes no matter how modestly or gently they're enunciated. And at a time when Germany's connection to Mohamed Atta and other perpetrators of the September 11 attacks is giving citizens the jitters, tough-on-crime messages are bound to fall on sympathetic ears. In the Hamburg legislative elections the week after the World Trade Center attacks, Judge Ronald Schill (a hitherto little-known crank nicknamed "Judge Merciless") saw his new party (which no one had even bothered to name) enter the city-state's government with 20 percent of the vote. That Stoiber's nomination will provide aid and comfort to Germany's small but worrisome hard right appears unlikely. On the contrary, he provides enough of an alternative to Schröder to slow the movement to splinter parties, which tend to drum up recruits around *ad hoc* grievances in the months before elections.

Stoiber won the nomination in a hard-fought backroom battle against the CDU's most popular politician, party chief Angela Merkel. Merkel is respected inside and outside the ranks for her cleanup of various Kohl-era financial scandals. Moreover, as the most prominent national politician from the Neue Länder (East Germany), she was touted as the party's best chance of bringing vast new coalitions into its fold.

But under the circumstances, the party reckoned the Neue Länder would take care of themselves. Unemployment is at 20 percent in parts of the old East—quite a feat, considering that the region's cities on average have lost a third of their population in the last decade.

No one questions that the East is where the swing voters are. Schröder and Stoiber have both done their splashiest early campaigning there. But after Helmut Kohl's nation-sweeping landslide in 1990, the year of unification, eastern voters have become predictably unpredictable. Cut off from the memories of church and union hall that create multigenerational party loyalties among western voters, they tend to embrace a fairly simple throw-the-bums-out ethic. Schröder's Social Democrats won the region solidly in 1998, but polls show that, were the election held today, they would fall to third, behind the Christian Democrats and the ex-Communist party of Democratic Socialism.

Europe complicates the Social Democrats' problems. It was Germany that insisted in the mid-1990s on tough budget-balancing requirements for European Union member states, limiting budget deficits to 3 percent. Now it's Germany, the economic basket case of Europe, that is closest to busting those budget caps, with deficits of 2.6 percent—so stimulus packages are out of the question. Germany cannot even afford to honor its economic commitments to a common European military. The post-Kosovo plan to jointly fund and order 73 Airbus military transport planes was the brainchild of German defense minister Rudolf Scharping. But now that Germany's seven partner states have approved the deal, Germany is $3 billion short, and finds it politically impossible to vote the remaining money. The contract is on hold.

Schröder has until September to find about a million jobs. In a recession economy where daily wages approach the average annual income of Malaysians, that will be quite a task. If Schröder can either create or (more likely) credibly promise such jobs, he will be reelected. If he can't, the international center-left—whose ascendancy over Western democracies began to crumble with the election of Bush, and continued with Silvio Berlusconi's rise to power in Italy—will take another casualty. For Schröder is at low ebb, in a situation not dissimilar to the one Bill Clinton faced in 1994. Like Clinton, he is a deft enough politician that no one should count him out. But given the dire state into which he has driven the economy, deftness may not count for much. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Despotism in Saudi Arabia

They're even more intolerant than you think.

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

PRESIDENT BUSH, in his State of the Union address, gave a stirring summation of the values dear to America and its allies in the struggle against global terrorism. Among the "non-negotiable demands of human dignity," Bush included religious tolerance. He did so at a time when American policymakers and citizens alike are wrestling with the challenges posed by our relationship with Saudi Arabia, a country some promote as our best friend among the Arab powers.

It is not, however, a friend that shares our commitment to religious tolerance. "Religious Freedom in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," a new report issued by the dissident Saudi Institute (*www.saudi-institute.org*) in McLean, Va., is a stark reminder of the kingdom's repressive regime in religious affairs, dictated by the Wahhabi dispensation that is the official state sect. Saudi Arabia's ban on Christian worship and its physical exclusion of Jews from the country are familiar. But the lengths to which the Saudi authorities go to suppress Islamic alternatives to Wahhabism are virtually unknown outside the Muslim world.

Among the more than 200 religious prisoners currently being held in Saudi Arabia are 17 who face execution or life sentences. Their offense: They are Shiite Muslims. Shiites are the most oppressed victims of Wahhabism in the kingdom. They are forced to change their names (as were Jews in Nazi Germany, Koreans under Japanese imperialism, and Albanians ruled by the Serbs). Further, thousands of Shiites are barred from leaving the country (in a measure reminiscent of Soviet communism).

In the southern city of Najran, Shiites face a campaign to force their conversion to Wahhabi Sunni Islam. As the new report notes, "The history of Shiaism in Najran is 1,400 years old." Nevertheless, a state religious commissar, Sheikh Ali Khursan, denounced the Shiites as "infidels" to the *Wall Street Journal* last month. Shiite clerics have been arrested on charges of "sorcery," and Shiites have been accused of conducting orgies in their meeting places.

One Shiite divine, Sheikh Mahdi Theab al-Mahaan, was imprisoned for three years and received 3,000 lashes, a common punishment for religious unorthodoxy. Four Shiite high school students in Najran, aged 16 and 17, were arrested after a fight with a Wahhabi instructor who insulted their faith. They received two to four years in jail and 500 to 800 lashes each. Sheikh Ahmed Turki al-Sa'ab was arrested on January 15, six days after he was quoted in the *Wall Street Journal*.

On April 23, 2000, Saudi intelligence agents and religious police stormed al-Mansoura, the main Shiite mosque in Najran. This attack followed a campaign of incitement by the city's lead judge, Sheikh Muhammad al-Askari. Officers arrested a Shiite religious teacher in the mosque, confiscated religious manuscripts, and shot one Shiite Muslim. About 60 Shiites gathered at the residence of the regional governor (in a Holiday Inn!) to protest the arrest of the teacher. Trucks mounted with machine guns were posted outside the hotel, and two Shiite protesters were shot dead and dozens wounded. The injured were taken from the hospital to prison, where they remain today.

Authorities sent emergency forces to the town, but they could not enter the neighborhood of the al-Mansoura mosque; some Shiites armed themselves to guard the home of their local leader, Sheikh Husayn Ismail al-Makrami. The government sent army troops to the city, accompanied by 20 American-made tanks and other combat vehicles. The military occupation lasted a week, during which 600 Shiites were arrested on the streets, some of them beaten.

Repression, of course, is hardly confined to Najran. And members of three non-Wahhabi Sunni sects, the Malikis, Shafi'is, and Hanafis, are also subjected to discrimination. All textbooks used in Saudi Arabia are based on Wahhabi doctrines and condemn other Sunnis as heretics, even though Shafi'i Islam was once dominant in the country and its adherents still comprise the majority in western Arabia. Publications by non-Wahhabi sects are banned, confiscated, and burned. Religious commentaries on state electronic media are limited to official Wahhabi arguments. Meanwhile, here in the United States, the World Assembly of Muslim Youth, an official Saudi body with an office in Falls Church, Va., distributes literature describing Shiite Islam as the product of a Jewish conspiracy.

The success of the 70-year campaign of disinformation maintained in the West to protect Saudi power is reaching an end. Difficult as it may be for our leaders to say it in public, it is increasingly clear that Saudi Arabian Wahhabism is part of the "axis of evil"—and possibly the most dangerous part. ♦

Stephen Schwartz, a frequent contributor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, *is completing his book,* Two Faces of Islam.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WALL buy your way to the top STREET JOURNAL.

Knowledge, insights, inspiration, news, information, ideas, techniques and strategies... all for only 57¢ a day.

Every business day, The Wall Street Journal gives you a unique overview of all the events, trends, ideas and products that affect your business, your finances and your life. The Journal's concise, intelligent articles give you everything that's important for you to know – without wasting a minute of your time.

It's all together in one place – top world news, crucial reports from all areas of business, stimulating articles on matters of deep personal concern, and all the financial information and insight you need for your planning. And it's all yours for just 57¢ a day.

Mail the coupon below or call toll-free 1-800-910-5454.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. **Adventures in Capitalism.**

To subscribe now, call 1-800-910-5454

To subscribe by mail:

☐ Please send me: 13 weeks for 57¢ a day ($36.75)

or lock in my savings and send me:

☐ 26 weeks for 55¢ a day ($71.00)

☐ 52 weeks for 58¢ a day ($149.50)

☐ Check enclosed (make payable to The Wall Street Journal.)

☐ Bill me

Charge to:

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

☐ Discover ☐ Diners Club

Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail coupon to: The Wall Street Journal.
228 East 45th Street
New York, NY 10017

Offer good for a limited time and only to new subscribers in the Continental U.S.

©1999 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
1WKSTD/3PBDC

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On to Iran!

Checkmating the clerics

By Reuel Marc Gerecht

President George W. Bush's stunningly forceful State of the Union address has probably forever altered U.S.-Iranian relations. It may provoke a redrawing of the intellectual map of the Middle East, giving liberal democracy its best chance in the region since the end of World War II. In following through on his promise to counter and preempt hostile Iranian actions, the president will likely accelerate the collapse of the clerical regime. This is a good thing, for unless the regime falls, the Islamic Republic's penchant for tyranny, terrorism, and unconventional weaponry will not evanesce. As the sad experience of the "moderate" president Mohammad Khatami gives ample evidence, the clerical regime isn't evolving into a humane, "Islamic democracy." Indeed, we may well be watching the clerics immerse themselves again in a wave of anti-American terrorism.

You wouldn't likely grasp, of course, the momentous possibilities in the president's "axis of evil" speech by reading the Iranian reaction to it. Ali Khamenei, Iran's clerical godfather, found the president to be "a man thirsty for human blood" and the United States "the greatest evil" in the world—fairly routine commentary from a mullah capable of much more creative anti-American invective. (The French say more or less the same thing each week in *Le Monde Diplomatique.*) President Khatami, who usually smiles more forcefully than he speaks, called the State of the Union "belligerent, insulting, and anti-Iranian." Mehdi Karrubi, a radical but utterly corrupt cleric who now fashions himself a reformer and a bridge to American VIPs, just called the president "impolite." Although the clerical regime is unquestionably concerned about President Bush's tough language—the Iranians always pay close attention to American commentary, especially when U.S. soldiers and B-52s have been pummeling one of their neighbors—we shouldn't imagine that words alone will register profoundly with Tehran. The mullahs have seen harsh rhetoric from Washington before, and the follow-up has usually been less fierce.

And if the Near East bureau of the Department of State has much to do with the execution of the new policy, we can rest assured it will be a lot less fierce this time. It is a decent bet that many, if not most, diplomats in the bureau would agree wholeheartedly with Ayatollah Karrubi's sentiment about Bush's speech. Even before May 1997, when Mohammad Khatami was first elected president, there was little enthusiasm within the bureau for the Clinton administration's strategy of "dual containment" of Iraq and Iran. Export-oriented Europe didn't like it, and the administration didn't really want to enforce sanctions against our allies and the Russians, who are the principal arms-supplier to Tehran. It's the pits to be an American diplomat delivering démarches that no one reads, let alone fears. And it's natural for foreign service officers to be sympathetic to the views of their hosts, particularly if Washington doesn't fight hard for its own side.

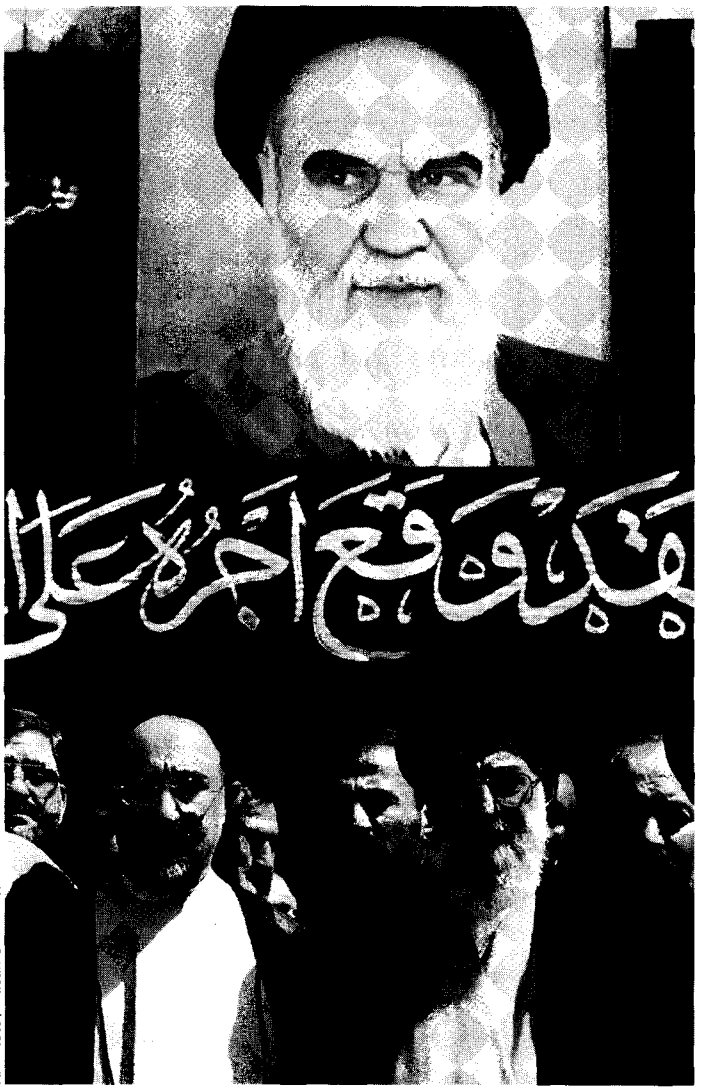
Khatami's election and his "dialogue-of-civilizations" interview on CNN in January 1998 whetted hopes at State that the cold war between Washington and Tehran, and the tension between us and our allies, might be over. A good-guy-Khatami-versus-bad-guy-Khamenei view took hold at Foggy Bottom, as it did in the American business community and academe. They all embraced Khatami more eagerly than they had Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the cleric who first dampened the revolutionary fires inside his country.

This philo-Khatami attitude continued past September 11, which is astonishing since the Iranian president had long since become politically irrelevant in Tehran and the clerical town of Qom. He had repeatedly failed to throw down the gauntlet at those in the regime who were increasingly harassing journalists, students, government employees, and women—all important voices in the "civil society" coalition that twice elected Khatami. He was, as an Iranian who'd known him from childhood once remarked, "a chicken," which was one of the most important reasons why Rafsanjani, the first "moderate" president of the republic and the second most powerful mullah in Iran, decided to back him in 1997. With Khatami in the presidency, there would be no radical change.

Nevertheless, the State Department saw the Afghan war as an excellent opportunity to build a bridge to the

Reuel Marc Gerecht is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



AP Photo / Hasan Sarbakhshian

President Khatami (left) and Ayatollah Khamenei

clerical regime, since the enemy (the Iranians) of my enemy (the Taliban) ought to be my friend. With the department's Policy Planning boss Richard Haass in the lead, State began sending signals to Tehran, and to Congress, that Iran was being helpful to America's antiterrorist coalition. U.S. officials were favorably impressed with Iran's promise to undertake search-and-rescue missions for any American pilot downed over Iranian territory. Ditto with the Iranian military aid program to Ismail Khan, the Afghan warlord whom the Taliban in 1995 chased from the western provincial capital of Herat. In Washington, some U.S. officials spoke with hushed awe of the intelligence Tehran provided about the whereabouts of Taliban leaders and Osama bin Laden. And the clerics didn't sabotage the Bonn conference on Afghanistan's political future. All in all, according to Ambassador Haass, the Iranians were playing a "constructive" role in Afghanistan.

This was nonsense. The "pro-American drift" (*Washington Post*) of the Iranian government during the Afghan war was an illusion—Persian realpolitik, as fear of American airpower dovetailed with Western hopefulness and gullibility. The clerics in Tehran, attentive students of history who keenly understand the anti-American ideological underpinnings of their regime, knew that the American enemy of a Muslim foe must remain *the* enemy. In the war against the Taliban, the clerics actually gave us little to nothing. Allowing U.S. warplanes and helicopter crews overflight and search-and-rescue rights in Iranian airspace would have been something; offering to aid a hypothetically downed pilot was not. (The Iranians probably would have returned any stranded U.S. pilot—B-52s and smart bombs concentrate the mind—but it might not have been the quickest homeward voyage.) And Tehran's providing information about the whereabouts of senior Taliban and al Qaeda officials isn't particularly compelling evidence of friendly intentions. Whatever they gave us obviously wasn't top-drawer stuff since most of the leadership of the Taliban and al Qaeda appear to have escaped. Also, if the clerics could get Americans to bomb Taliban leaders they hate, this again seems most sensible and sound—a bit like getting Washington to give you anti-tank missiles in exchange for liberating American hostages whom your foreign proxies kidnapped. Tehran's arming of Ismail Khan, as we can now clearly see, is a double-edged affair, since with the strategic city of Herat back in the Iranian orbit, the clerics can once again become players in Afghanistan's hardball internecine politics.

Which is, of course, why the Iranians had no need to complicate the Bonn conference. The facts on the ground, not any arrangements in Germany, will decide Afghanistan's fate. All the Iranians really needed from the conference was the assurance that the exiled Afghan king, Zahir Shah, wasn't immediately going home. The clerics, who understandably felt uncomfortable with the image of a shah returning to unify his nation, found all the discussion of the king's return frightfully loathsome. Since the return of Zahir Shah is a troublesome issue for the Afghans themselves, the Iranians need not have worried. Tehran now just has to bide its time, hoping that the Americans—whom the clerics fear far more than the Afghan-meddling Pakistanis—don't have the perseverance to long remain a force in Afghan politics. Given America's post-Vietnam aversion to nation-building, and since Washington hasn't even yet opened a U.S. consulate in Herat, it's probably a good bet.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Many U.S. officials and Iran experts have believed for nearly a decade that the Iranian regime has retired from anti-American terrorism. The Iranian intelligence service might regularly murder expatriates in Europe and the Middle East, and Tehran might send lethal aid to Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad for their attacks against Israelis and Jews, these experts think, but the clerics no longer really want to attack the United States. By the 1990s, Iranian intelligence and the Revolutionary Guard Corps, and their faithful followers in the Lebanese Hezbollah, particularly its voraciously lethal security chief Imad Mughniyah, had stopped blowing up embassies and Marine barracks and kidnapping and killing American citizens and U.S. officials. The clerics were, so the reasoning went, tired of the battle against the "Great Satan." Thermidor had arrived. The mullahs now preferred trade to terrorism. After America's war against Iraq, they were scared of U.S. military power. The Europeans, who were all over Iran trying to find a way to make a profit, kept telling Americans how the country had changed. One just had to ignore the occasional expatriate killing spree, the clerical regime's penchant for supporting radical Palestinians, and its weapons-of-mass-destruction programs, which were justified in any case since Saddam Hussein was still right next door. The mullahs would outgrow their bad habits, we were told, as the regime aged and democratized.

The 1996 bombing at Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, that killed 19 American soldiers threw a kink into this analysis, but the election of Mohammad Khatami arrived just in time to quiet serious reflection on that bloody episode the summer before. As one think-tanker (now a senior official in the Bush administration) remarked offhandedly, it was not wise to underscore probable Iranian complicity in the Khobar bombing for fear of derailing Khatami's reform movement and the "thaw" in U.S.-Iranian relations. Though this was an absurd and dangerous analysis of Iranian culture and the clerical system—the "be-nice-and-the-moderates-might-win" approach to Middle Eastern power politics—the view was quite widespread in the Clinton administration.

Given the op-eds and think-tank papers written just before and during the Afghan war—essays that carried the signatures of former national security adviser Brent Scowcroft, former secretary of defense James Schlesinger, former congressman Lee Hamilton, and former undersecretary of state for political affairs Thomas Pickering—this détentist view of commerce and politics still has currency in establishment circles. This perspective, again, is astonishing since Mohammad Khatami—regardless of whatever he believes in his eclectic mullah soul—was a political irrelevancy in Iran even before his reelection in June 2001. The clerical ruling class had coalesced decisively around Khamenei. And the truth be told: Khatami and Khamenei do not in all probability significantly differ on whether the United States, by its very nature, is harmful to the Islamic Republic.

It is also stupefying that anyone, 24 years after the revolution, still believes that trade could have a moderating effect on the clerical regime's behavior. The Middle Eastern mercantile tradition, like the Italian, sees war and commerce as compatible. Rafsanjani and Khamenei, who have probably authorized every Iranian terrorist operation since the early 1980s, have both advocated increasing U.S.-Iranian commerce. Both favored the Conoco oil-and-gas deal cancelled by the Clinton administration in 1995; they both appear to favor Boeing over Airbus if given the choice. They'd love to buy oil-drilling equipment, big electric turbines, and high technology from the United States, not to mention American military equipment, if they could get their hands on it.

The mullahs have been trading with the Western Europeans for 20 years while killing dozens of Iranian expatriates on European soil. If the Americans start to act like Europeans—engage in trade and a "critical dialogue" regardless of clerical behavior—why should the mullahs moderate their comportment? Laissez-faire trade blended with political rationalism inevitably drops you to the lowest common denominator, which is where the clerics, first-rate realpoliticians with a sharp ideological edge, operate against Westerners most effectively.

Nonetheless, it is likely that the State Department, the Europeans, influential voices in the American business and foreign-policy communities, and the American academic crowd specialized in the Middle East will resist the logic of President Bush's "axis of evil" address. A return to non-belligerent dialogue, even if indirect and haphazard, will appear to many as a more reasonable approach.

After all, Iran really hasn't changed its spots since September 11. The clerical regime has been seriously seeking nuclear weapons since the end of the Gulf War in 1991. Its ballistic missile program is even older. Tehran has been giving money and weaponry to Palestinian radicals and the Lebanese Hezbollah for years. The capture of the Palestinian Authority's vessel the *Karine A*, laden with 50 tons of Iranian weaponry, wasn't surprising. It seemed shocking only because of the quantity of arms captured in one raid, not because of the provenance of the weapons. And the Khobar affair recedes in our memory, camouflaged by the quick Saudi decision to behead Saudi Shiites convicted of the crime and now blurred by al Qaeda's successes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AP Photos / Vahid Salemi

Prayers at a ceremony marking the 12th anniversary of Khomeini's death, June 4, 2001.

Taliban) can be my friend. It is still too early to know how many members of al Qaeda have left Afghanistan. The odds are good that much, if not most, of al Qaeda's leadership has escaped. It will not be surprising for us to learn that the members of al Qaeda who originally came with Ayman az-Zawahiri from the Egyptian Islamic Jihad have found friendly sanctuary in the Islamic Republic. Zawahiri, bin Laden's right-hand man, has long been admired in Tehran, where he has visited on occasion. Al Qaeda, like the Egyptian Islamic Jihad before it, is for Tehran an answer to a 20-year quest to find effective anti-American allies among Sunni Arab Islamic militants. Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and to a certain extent the Palestine Liberation Organization have all been successful Sunni Arab allies of Shiite Iran's ecumenical, anti-Western foreign policy. The PLO, which gave significant aid to the clerics and their Revolutionary Guard Corps at the dawn of the Islamic revolution, has never lost its contacts with the clerical regime—the *Karine A* being only the latest proof of the clerics' fidelity to undiluted Palestinian radicalism.

Also, the clerical regime has been brutalizing the Iranian people for two decades, and the oppression today is, in important ways, much lighter than it was 10 years ago. Mohammad Khatami may be a limp reformer, but the reform movement, fueled by the frustration and anger of the Iranian people, stays alive, always inflaming the democratic spirit that is woven into the contradictory political ethos of the Islamic Republic's theocracy. So, then, what's the big deal, some "pragmatists" are already saying. The Europeans can, perhaps, be forgiven for being a bit dismayed that George W. Bush has so abruptly changed the ground rules that they and many Americans had long accepted. They can't really see why September 11 fundamentally changed the status quo. As the French foreign minister Hubert Védrine put it, America is again being "simplistic."

Now, Iran's possible relationship with al Qaeda is, of course, an enormous wild card. If the information that the U.S. government has on Iranian assistance to al Qaeda members fleeing Afghanistan is ironclad, the "pragmatic" approach to Tehran will collapse, at least on this side of the Atlantic. In the meantime, however, the "pragmatists" will hope, as Secretary of State Colin Powell does, "that we may be able to talk to Iran, that we may be able to have a reasonable conversation with Iranian leaders."

The al Qaeda link, unfortunately for the "pragmatists," makes a lot of sense. The mullahs have likely perceived that the ally (Osama bin Laden) of my enemy (the

But none of these groups operates explicitly and consistently against the United States. Al Qaeda does. If al Qaeda can survive the Afghan war, then Tehran stands to gain significantly. Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda will continue their propaganda war against the United States and Saudi Arabia. Just a quick read of bin Laden's declarations and interviews reveals that the similarities between his views and those of the ruling clerics in Tehran are far greater than their differences. Al Qaeda, unlike many fundamentalist Sunni groups, has no nasty anti-Shiite overtones. Like clerical Iran, al Qaeda wants Muslims to put aside their sectarian differences for the greater calling against the United States. The more bin Laden and al Qaeda can roil the intellectual environment of the Middle East, the more America's Muslim allies in the region can be kept off balance. In particular, the Saudi royal family, for whom Iran's revolutionary clerics have a special distaste, can be battered internally if its nemesis,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Osama bin Laden and his organization, survives. September 11 has obviously and significantly damaged U.S.-Saudi ties. The Iranians probably believe that al Qaeda, if effectively operational, will continue to strain the alliance as it draws further financial and spiritual support from its extensive Saudi network and fan club, which may well include members of the royal family.

Also, when al Qaeda bombs us, the Iranians—unless they're very clumsy—won't get blamed. The Iranian calculation on anti-American terrorism has always been fairly straightforward: Is there a buffer between Tehran and the frontline terrorists sufficient to conceal adequately its involvement? (There is, by the way, absolutely no evidence, not even good gossip, to suggest that the clerical elite has ever engaged in a moral debate about the ethics of terrorism against the enemies of God and state.)

The Iranians aren't cowards; they're just cautious. They don't require invisibility—their patronage of Hezbollah and Imad Mughniyah was no secret when they were blowing us to bits in Lebanon in the 1980s. And the Iranians definitely feared Ronald Reagan, yet were willing to bomb us on his watch. Indeed the Iranians' success at blowing up 241 Marines in Beirut in 1983, and President Reagan's ignominiously rapid retreat, gave birth to modern radical Islamic terrorism against the United States. Bin Laden sometimes dates "Islam's worldwide jihad" against America from the Beirut action. And it is certainly a distressing datum that many key players from Iran's Lebanese terrorist network in the 1980s have found a happy home in the clerical inner circles around Mohammad Khatami. Ali Akbar Mohtashemi-pur, Iran's former ambassador to Syria and Imad Mughniyah's boss, for instance, has settled in comfortably as a clerical reformer. He remains intimately connected to Hezbollah, an adviser on Lebanon to Iranian clerics of all political stripes.

And Iranians are rather good with, as they say in the trade, "cut-outs." The 1996 Khobar bombing in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, which had Tehran's fingerprints all over it, illustrates a classic Iranian technique. Local or rented non-Iranian Shiites are the frontline terrorists—Iran's role is in planning and, if necessary, providing logistical and financial aid. For Tehran, al Qaeda is the best of all possible worlds since its kamikaze terrorists are always Sunni and usually die, thereby enhancing operational security. Al Qaeda would supply *the* attribute most prized by the clerical regime: plausible deniability, which has usually worked with Westerners, who have never had (the Israelis are the possible exception) the heart and stamina for an unlimited, not particularly fastidious war against terrorism. Al Qaeda's bombing runs also provide Tehran with camouflaging static noise, allowing the clerics more maneuvering room to plan their own unilateral terrorist operations if they so choose.

What would be an acceptable risk for the Iranians in an al Qaeda terrorist operation? Perhaps supplying the organization with approximately 500 pounds of C-4 plastic explosives for its attack against the USS *Cole* in the port of Aden in October 2000. The first attempt, against the USS *The Sullivans* in January 2000, failed when the al Qaeda team overloaded the bomb-carrying skiff with conventional charges and it sank, according to official Yemeni sources. Somebody came to the rescue with a large delivery of C-4—not easily available on the arms market in such quantity, and probably not something you'd want to haul quickly from landlocked Afghanistan. Somebody could have delivered the shipment by sea, as the Iranians did when they delivered C-4 and other arms to the Palestinian Authority's freighter *Karine A* in the Persian Gulf. Or the Iranians could easily have transshipped 500 pounds of *plastique* via Dubai, where the clerics can move anything and anyone in and out.

And Iran's ruling clergy has probably been reading the Middle East more or less the same way as the Sunni fundamentalists who made bin Laden and al Qaeda paladins in their battle against the West. The perception of the United States as weak and on the run—the jet-fuel behind Osama bin Laden's holy-warrior call to arms—is not unique to Sunni Arab Muslims. Iran's clerics, particularly the hard core, who dominate the country's government, were acutely aware of the Clinton administration's tendency to scoot in difficult times. They had a ringside seat for America's hapless flailings against Saddam Hussein throughout the 1990s. They paid close attention to our halfhearted support and quick abandonment of the Iraqi opposition in northern Iraq in 1995 and 1996. They, like everybody else in the Middle East, watched America's lame coup attempt launched from Jordan go completely awry. They watched the Israelis—whom the Iranians see as inextricably linked to America by culture and conspiracy (the unseen, global Jewish cabal that has America in its hands)—unilaterally withdraw from Lebanon in May 2000, abandoning their Lebanese allies to the tender mercies of Hezbollah. Ali Khamenei and Mohammad Khatami both made breathtaking, inspiring speeches about the Israeli retreat from Lebanon.

And they watched Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak's government absorb, without serious reprisal, hit after hit from Palestinian terrorists, some of whom, like the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, verge on being wholly owned subsidiaries of Tehran. The Iranians know that the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AFP / Behrouz Mehri

An anti-American mural adorns the wall of the former U.S. embassy in Tehran.

Israelis know that the Palestinian Islamic Jihad is an appendage of the clerical regime, which has made the Israelis' "measured" reactions even more damning. The clerics repeatedly saw the Clinton and Bush administrations call upon the Israelis to exercise "restraint." Perhaps the most watched barometer of American nerve in the Middle East—Will Washington allow Israel to fight?—has indicated for years that America no longer has the loins to maintain its influence in the region.

The Americans and Europeans have for decades committed a cardinal strategic sin in de facto trying to separate Israel from the West, denying it the fraternity, association, and security guarantees that are natural, for example, among NATO members. Terrorism, like any covert action, is an acquired taste—a mental and physical reflex that must be exercised to stay fit and vibrant. By allowing Israel to bleed through terrorist attack—by failing to state clearly and unequivocally that the West does not recognize terrorism against Israelis as legitimate, and by not bringing Western arms to bear against Hezbollah and the PLO when they engaged in outrageous acts of terrorism—the West encouraged the Iranian clergy, among others, to view terrorism as a legitimate and successful means of statecraft. More important, Western neglect, the failure of Western Europe and the United States to threaten clerical Iran meaningfully, allowed Iran's terrorist apparatus in Lebanon—the Revolutionary Guard Corps and the Ministry of Intelligence—to stay in training.

Winston Churchill once remarked that for a certain number of British officers to be killed in combat each year on the Raj's Northwest Frontier would keep the ruling class vigilant and serious. The same can be said of Iran's role among the Lebanese Shiites of Hezbollah and the Palestinian radicals. The clerical regime in Iran has invested an enormous amount of its prestige—even its raison d'être—in both Hezbollah and the Palestinians. The members of Hezbollah are truly the only faithful offspring of Iran's Islamic revolution. They are not, as some Lebanon-saturated journalists still like to say, just "a national liberation movement" (the Shiite Amal, not Hezbollah, properly deserve that title).

The Iranians have repeatedly gotten away with murder—in the Middle East, in Europe, and elsewhere—and learned well how "sophisticated" Westerners can waffle in response to terrorism. This perception extends to their efforts to obtain nuclear weapons and, no doubt, to their grand objective to use them as leverage to enhance their security and sphere of influence throughout the Middle East.

President Bush's war in Afghanistan has unquestionably altered this perception. But we should be very wary of believing that the Iranians are now convinced that the Americans will permanently stand and fight. The utility, and certainly the pleasure, of anti-American terrorism probably still has serious appeal in Tehran. And the Afghan war has shaken the already abysmal internal confidence of the clergy. The clerics, especially the ruling hard core, don't precisely separate domestic and external foes. Terrorism at home and abroad comes naturally to profoundly conspiratorial mullahs elevated in great part through the use of clandestine operations and violence. And the clerics have reason to be scared of their own flock. The Iranian people with increasing frequency and volume remind their overlords why the United States—the whispering, seductive devil that infuriated Khomei-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ni—is by its nature an implacable enemy of the Islamic Republic.

Since September 11, Iran has seen an enormous increase in the public display of anticlerical and pro-American emotions. Soccer riots that turn into anticlerical demonstrations have resumed; the first major one, in February 1990, terrified the clergy, leading to the creation of special anti-riot units within the Revolutionary Guard Corps and the Basij, an increasingly thuggish paramilitary force. Universities have again become arenas for rallies and open dissension. Soccer riots and university demonstrations are particularly unnerving since they threaten the integrity of the regime's security forces, which are composed largely of young men not so dissimilar in cultural background and upbringing from the young men yelling the anticlerical chants and lighting candles to show sympathy for America's loss.

Nostalgia for the last shah's son, Reza Pahlavi, who lives in Virginia, has again risen (this has happened periodically since the revolution; in the late 1980s Iranian women were smuggling photos of "baby shah" into Iran taped to their bosoms). By being ever more vocal in his calls for secular democracy in his homeland, Pahlavi has reinforced his appeal among Iranians, who, even if they are old enough to remember his father, no longer always spit when they hear the word "shah." Behind all the discontent released since September 11 is the hope that somehow America can make it right. With no meaningful leader on the horizon and the cult of Khatami fading fast, many Iranians are looking outside the country for a force that the clerics cannot imprison or kill. As a professor at Tehran university put it, "If the Americans could destroy the Taliban, *inshallah*, they might do the same to our religious despots."

Given the situation inside Iran, President Bush's "axis of evil" address was exceptionally timely, perhaps the equal of Churchill's Fulton speech. But what exactly does the State of the Union address mean for Iran policy?

If the administration is confident that al Qaeda members are in Iran, then our course of action ought to be clear. We should immediately threaten the clerics' regime militarily where it would hurt them and help us most: the Tehran-to-Damascus military transport planes that supply Hezbollah in Lebanon. These flights sustain the "Party of God," making them a force to be reckoned with in southern Lebanon and increasingly and clandestinely a key arms-supplier to Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. These flights are easily monitored by surveillance aircraft and spy satellites.

Tehran should be notified that no future flights will be permitted—that any aircraft seen or suspected of carrying military materiel will be forcibly diverted to Israel, shot down, or destroyed on the tarmac. Washington should also inform the Assad regime in Damascus—a key partner in the Iran-Hezbollah terrorist network—that these flights must cease and that any ground and naval resupply effort detected through Syrian territory or waters will lead to the swift destruction of the Syrian air force. Without a Soviet sugar daddy behind it, the Assad regime in Syria has become careful about husbanding its expensive, hard-to-replace military hardware. Without aircraft and tanks to intimidate its own citizenry, the Assad family might well fall.

The clerics in Tehran have for years largely defined their westward-looking foreign policy in terms of what they and Hezbollah could do to strike Israel. The "loss" of Hezbollah would be an enormous and embarrassing blow to the mullahs, shaking the regime to its foundations. The clerics would likely cease any major effort to resupply Hezbollah once it was clear that Washington was serious; they would of course test to see whether we were serious. But the good thing about the clerical regime is that it clearly understands power politics; the Iranian reflex is to back down when the opposing force demonstrates that it is willing and able to fight.

We must be prepared, however, to take the battle more directly to the mullahs if they continue to resupply Hezbollah by other means or to pursue a liaison with al Qaeda. Washington must be ready to target Revolutionary Guard Corps units in Lebanon and inside Iran, along with Ministry of Intelligence facilities and personnel. We should also put out feelers—and let the clerics know that we are doing so—to Iranians, especially officials and military officers, who are interested in a change of government in Tehran. Washington's ultimate objective must be to create circumstances inside the Islamic Republic that leave Iranians themselves sensing that the clerical regime no longer has a future.

The Bush administration ought to want to unnerve the ruling clerics, and embolden Iran's people, by letting all know that America, as President Bush declared in his State of the Union address, favors real popular government in Iran. The administration must not, under any circumstances, reach out to "moderate" and "pragmatic" mullahs to the detriment of the Iranian people. This strategy is fool's gold. All we would be doing in reality is reaching out to the head of the powerful Expediency Council, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who *is* indeed a moderate, pragmatic, and *powerful* cleric. And if Rafsanjani reaches back, he will most certainly beat us black and blue.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What if Washington doesn't have complete confidence in the information connecting al Qaeda to Iran? Should its course of action be different? Fundamentally, no. Washington doesn't have, as national security adviser Condoleezza Rice suggested, "a multiplicity of means" to deal with the clerical regime. In fact, we have only two meaningful options: Confront clerical Iran and its proxies militarily or ring it with an oil embargo. We have tried everything else before.

U.S. sanctions against Iran have certainly had an effect upon the country's economy and its ability to obtain easily certain military technologies; they have had no visible effect upon the clerical regime's behavior. Sanctions simply don't have the painful immediacy needed to dissuade the clerical regime from engaging in nefarious actions it deems in its essential interests. Minus an oil embargo, the Iranian economy is much too black and elastic to react helpfully—with riots and demonstrations on cue—to boycotts. Sanctions haven't worked against Saddam Hussein; they will not work against Khamenei.

And the Bush administration is puffing if it thinks the Europeans and Russians will aid us by tying a tighter economic knot around the clerical regime. When the French company Total replaced Conoco in 1995, the French prime minister Lionel Jospin exclaimed, *"Je me réjouis!"* ("I am delighted!"). And the prime minister doesn't appear any less delighted today. The repercussions of September 11 simply aren't enough in Europe and Russia for effective multilateralism to be an option against the Islamic Republic.

Nor is covert action a choice. The clerical regime has repeatedly made mincemeat of the Central Intelligence Agency's best efforts. Covert action is a mental muscle that must be in constant training. A senior American official cannot wake up one day and call out the covert-action brigades. They simply don't exist at Langley. Though one can morally applaud the idea of former House Speaker Newt Gingrich—give $20 million to the clandestine service to use against the clerics—operationally it is a pipe dream. The Iranian people certainly deserve the same type of support we gave the Poles in the 1980s, but the odds are very high that any large-scale, covert-action effort by Langley, still a profoundly dysfunctional institution, would put brave Iranians into harm's way for no meaningful result.

It is a good litmus test of administration seriousness: The more we hear Washington talking about covert action against the clerics and Saddam Hussein, the more we can be sure that the "war on terrorism" is becoming a listless, phony campaign.

If Washington wants to dissuade and punish the clerical regime, it will have to use force, the only currency the clerics truly respect. An oil embargo would be immensely convulsive (not necessarily a bad thing); military actions far less so. Starting at the periphery of the Iranian world—Lebanon and possibly Afghanistan—probably makes the most tactical and strategic sense. Lebanon, in particular, offers the United States the option of hitting three targets—Hezbollah, the clerics, and the Assad regime—at once. However, if al Qaeda's liaison with Iran is active, then Washington should probably take the gloves off and hit the clerical regime with enormous force. If we turn a blind eye toward Iranian support of al Qaeda, we are asking for it.

The "axis of evil" speech was the logical follow-through on the president's equally historic declaration that the United States would henceforth treat states that harbor terrorists as terrorists themselves. This elevated to the level of statecraft the ancient common-law understanding that he who abets murder is a murderer. It also eliminated the self-defeating distinction between Israelis dying and Americans. Many diplomats in the Near East bureau at State found the new policy distasteful, correctly discerning that it deprives U.S. diplomacy of its accustomed wiggle-room around Middle Eastern terrorism. Yasser Arafat and Syria will have to go to the doghouse. Which is one reason why State absurdly tried to get Syria to join the antiterrorist coalition. Arafat's young-jackal protégés—the so-called "new generation" of Palestinian leadership—will also have to go, further complicating the Near East bureau's back-up plans if it can't resuscitate Arafat as a viable negotiating partner. By the president's logic, if not Secretary Powell's, the *Karine A* should be the last nail in Arafat's coffin.

The same relentless logic leads to confrontations with rogue states. The president understands a basic truth about tyrannies that employ terrorism and seek weapons of mass destruction: They are systemically evil. Their leaders are amoral dictators, with an acute appreciation of power politics and their enemy's jugular. They inevitably corrupt and destroy their own civil societies. You negotiate with them at your peril. If President Bush follows his own logic and compels his administration to follow him against Iraq and Iran, then he will sow the seeds for a new, safer, more liberal order in the Middle East. If America can hold its ground, two Muslim peoples who were badly burned by the twentieth century just might lead the way for their religious brethren to a more civil society, where the basic human decency their countries knew a century ago could return. That would be the proper and just end to America's war on terrorism. When it happens, God willing, the State Department will finally be able to send signals to Tehran and have a moderate cleric warmly answer. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bush Keeps the Faith

Contrary to some reports, the president's faith-based agenda is alive and well.

By John J. DiIulio Jr.

Over the last three weeks, the Bush administration has taken important steps that, together, should advance the president's volunteer service agenda, increase public and private support for community-serving religious organizations, and make federal social welfare programs work better and cost less.

First, last Thursday, President Bush announced his support for the Charity Aid, Recovery and Empowerment Act, or CARE, a Senate bill to aid charitable organizations, both religious and secular. His Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, of which I was then head, began work on the package in July, but the measure was recast last fall in response to new realities. In the wake of September 11, and as America rebounds from the recession, street-level Samaritans who mobilize volunteers, sponsor day care, run homeless shelters, lead housing rehabilitation projects, offer drug treatment, help ex-prisoners find jobs, shelter battered women, and perform other civic good works have faced growing demands with shrinking coffers.

As unveiled last week, CARE would restore for two years funding for social services block grants to the states, used mainly for child care and family aid; create new tax breaks for citizens and corporations that give to charity; and encourage religious groups to serve civic purposes by protecting their right to receive public grants for social programs without having to remove religious art or symbols from the buildings where the programs are housed. Together with other recent legislation—like the human services bill signed in January, which created a mentoring program for prisoners' children—CARE advances the president's compassion agenda. It immediately attracted eight Senate co-sponsors, half from each party.

Contributing editor John J. DiIulio Jr. is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute and directs the University of Pennsylvania's Fox Leadership Program.

Already, however, one hears assorted criticisms of CARE. Let me address two that come from the right and two from the left.

On the right, some assert that by backing CARE and, more generally, by tethering the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to his new volunteer service initiative, the USA Freedom Corps, the president has retreated from his promise to allow small community ministries, if they so choose, to compete to administer federally funded social welfare programs on the same basis as all other nonprofit providers of those services.

Not so. The faith-based agenda was always allied with national service. The president saw to it that the Corporation for National and Community Service under former Indianapolis mayor Steven Goldsmith worked closely with the faith-based office. As every study shows, the comparative advantage of local community-serving congregations (churches, synagogues, and mosques) is their ability to mobilize volunteers and work through inter-faith, religious/secular, and public/private partnerships. So, from day one, the community initiative and the broader agenda for volunteer service were linked.

Another complaint about CARE from the right is that it omits a provision of the "faith bill" passed by the House in mid-July that would ostensibly have permitted faith-based organizations receiving public funds to discriminate against homosexuals in their hiring practices, overriding any state and local laws to the contrary. Well, there was a "beliefs and tenets" provision to this effect in the first draft of the House bill, but Republican leaders of the House Judiciary Committee struck it from the bill in June.

Besides, check the public record. The White House consistently maintained that we should neither add to nor subtract from pertinent *existing* civil rights and other laws. Thus, we defended the *existing* rights of religious organiza-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AP Photos / J. Scott Applewhite

The president, promoting his faith-based initiative last July 4 in Philadelphia.

tions to take religion into account in hiring as provided by the 1964 Civil Rights Act, as reinforced by a 1972 statute, and as reaffirmed by a 9-0 1987 U.S. Supreme Court decision. The so-called ministerial exemption afforded under current laws is limited, and never need be invoked except by religious organizations with 15 or more full-time paid employees. The vast majority of community-serving congregations have nowhere near 15 paid full-time anything, and many volunteers come from outside the congregation and even outside the faith.

Meanwhile, critics on the left claim that, like the House bill before it, CARE gives faith-based organizations "special treatment" and would permit them to use public funds not only for social services, but for worship services. Untrue. All drafts of the House bill, including the final one, featured black-letter language forbidding any use of public funds for sectarian worship, religious instruction, or proselytizing. This language mirrored that in the "charitable choice" provision of the 1996 federal welfare reform bill signed by President Clinton. In 1996 as today, most people, including most religious conservatives, supported that prohibition, and even sought to strengthen it.

The other anti-CARE gripe on the left is that the bill provides "little new money" for social welfare needs, and is merely short-term anyway. Apparently we have now reached the point where $10 billion dollars over two years isn't real money.

But in addition to all that, what made the president's faith-based agenda truly important a year ago, and what makes it compelling still, is its potential to help radically reform federal social welfare programs. This brings me to the second positive development of the past three weeks, namely, the president's effort, led by Office of Management and Budget director Mitch Daniels, to institute real performance-based budgeting across the federal bureaucracy.

The president's first budget contained strong rhetorical nods in this direction, but his latest budget makes it official: OMB will be prodding the agencies to get serious about performance, not just process. This comes not a moment too soon. The federal government is spending more and more on social programs but has virtually no data to tell us whether, as a result of all that spending, any kids actually attain literacy, any addicts actually get off hard drugs, any teenagers actually avoid another pregnancy out of wedlock, any ex-prisoners actually find jobs, and so on. Most of the hundreds of billions of dollars that Washington spends on social welfare services are administered through grants to nonprofit organizations and other government-by-proxy agents. But these grants go, year in, year out, mainly to large nonprofits that even after a decade or more in the system have never been required to produce an ounce of evidence on their actual performance.

One major culprit is the block grant. As more federal social spending has been block-granted, spending has not declined, but our ability to know where the money goes—let alone what civic results follow—has arguably been weakened. Block grants often amount to little more than spending dollars Washington doesn't really have, for purposes it hasn't specified, with results that can't truly be measured or monitored.

The Bush White House is now determined to chal-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lenge this. A performance audit of five social service agencies completed by the faith-based initiatives office in August 2001, *Unlevel Playing Field*, identified the problems; the goal now is to move federal social service dollars away from low- or no-performance grantees and toward high-performance grantees, which I believe will prove to be those rooted in communities.

Two good examples of the kinds of programs that should benefit are those the president visited in Philadelphia last July 4, namely, the Youth Education for Tomorrow (YET) literacy program, and the Amachi program for mentoring prisoners' children.

Washington spends billions of dollars a year on all manner of after-school education programs targeted on low-income populations. The bipartisan education bill the president signed last month will add billions to this pile. But it will all be largely wasted unless something gives, for the mega-billions spent thus far have failed to dent an illiteracy rate of over 50 percent in some urban public schools.

More than 100,000 school children in Philadelphia read below grade level. They have after-school programs galore to attend, but few of these programs (a) seek out children who read well below "basic," (b) objectively and routinely measure pupil progress, (c) are community-anchored, and so facilitate pupil attendance and parental involvement, and (d) follow "best practices" (like linking oral language/vocabulary and reading; assessing teacher performance; and cross-lacing professional teachers with neighborhood volunteers). The government grantees get the same sock of public cash whether or not they follow these ABCs.

The goal is to move federal social service dollars away from low- or no-performance grantees and toward high-performance grantees.

But performance-based budgeting with teeth could force more federal funds into programs like the YET centers. Seed-funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, YET was developed by my former colleagues at Public/Private Ventures. It began in 2000. In its first nine months, 31 YET centers served nearly 900 school-age children who were, on average, reading more than two years behind grade level. About 80 percent of the children were African American, 75 percent were poor enough to receive free school lunches, 60 percent were in grades 1-5, and 20 percent were in high school. YET works with churches, Catholic schools, other faith-based groups, and public schools. Typically, classes are held in church basements after school for 90 minutes four days a week through the school year, and there is a summer program option.

The results? Children who attended YET centers 100 days or more vaulted 1.9 years in reading ability, while YET kids who came fewer than 100 days registered an average gain of "only" 1.1 grades. The average YET pupil was a third-grader who entered the program reading at first-grade level and, after just 60 classes, was already nearly at the level of second grade.

If performance standards for continued federal funding of after-school literacy programs are set at the YET levels, watch thousands of longtime grantees from coast to coast melt away, making room for community-serving congregations and other local groups to show what they can do by improving, for real, the life prospects of children who need to learn to read.

Likewise, there are scores of "youth development" programs funded by Washington across numerous agencies. But the record of federal funding is a sad mess, mostly disregarding the solid best-practices literature on how to run mentoring programs to yield desirable results—better school performance, less illicit drug use, and so on. Rather than splashing "youth development" dollars here, there, and everywhere, Washington should seek to fund only performance-accredited programs, including public/private and religious/secular ones that target the neediest young people.

Amachi is one such program, its name a West African word meaning "Who knows but what God has brought us through this child." Former Philadelphia mayor W. Wilson Goode Sr., a Baptist minister, developed the program. Working with citywide networks of churches, with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, with prison authorities, inmates, and inmates' families, and enjoying the support of Philadelphia's present mayor, John Street, Amachi mobilized nearly 500 mentors for as many prisoners' children in its first year.

Research evaluating the impact of Amachi on the children and their communities is only just beginning, but the preliminary evidence is uniformly encouraging. Also crucial, all of the Amachi program's partners are eager to know how effective their work has been. Contrast that with federally funded youth development programs that avoid performance audits and impact evaluations. Washington should direct funds only to organizations that are open to having their funding contingent on real performance reviews.

Rather than attempt to gain control of the federal social welfare leviathan by, over time, redirecting tax dol-

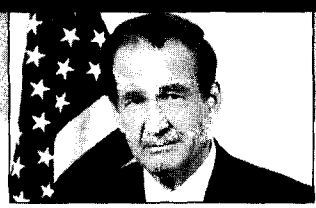
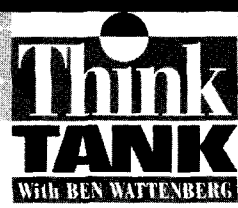
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lars away from nonprofits that don't get results and toward those that do, some libertarians suggest simply voucherizing the whole federal social welfare budget. Indeed, the fact that CARE, unlike the House bill, does not direct more welfare programs to work through vouchers is a further criticism of the Senate bill leveled by some conservatives.

The voucher visionaries fail to recognize that there is, in fact, no practical way to voucherize many federal social programs, that few of these programs operate under statutes that provide for "indirect disbursement arrangements," and that, alas, few smaller community-serving organizations, religious and secular, would benefit either from vouchers or any but the most narrowly targeted tax credits. Grass-roots groups generally serve clients on a rolling basis, with no stable "client lists." Their clients are disproportionately children, young people, and families that fall through the cracks of Medicaid and other large programs. And, since they do not advertise on television or raise money by direct mail, they tend to benefit least from tax incentives to encourage giving. And it's clear that all-out voucherizing is a political non-starter.

Still, to be a more realistic reform strategy than vouchers, performance-based budgeting will need determined backing well beyond OMB. It will require vigilance, notably, from the president's strong new appointees to lead the key agencies: Jim Towey at the faith-based office, John Bridgeland at the new USA Freedom Corps, and Jay Lefkowitz at the Domestic Policy Council.

Support on Capitol Hill is also essential. Last July, liberal Democrats were in danger of being seen as the anti-God squad when they thoughtlessly trashed the president's faith-based agenda. Luckily for them, they were restrained by New Democrats such as Senator Joe Lieberman. But today it is conservative Republicans who are in danger of appearing viscerally opposed to government-backed volunteer mobilization efforts, mindlessly unmoved by the president's call to public service, and stubbornly set against centrist legislation in this social policy arena, to the point that they risk being perceived as less supportive of the president's compassion agenda than even some Democrats. The president is keeping faith, and those in his own party should keep faith with him, too. ♦

You Can't Ignore Him. You *Can* Take Him On.

The Next 2 Weeks on Think Tank: Pat Buchanan and Ben Wattenberg on immigration, the culture war, and America's role in the world.

Part 1: Feb. 14 - 17 • Part 2: Feb. 21 – 24

Washington, D.C.:	Saturday	1:30 PM	WETA-26
	Sunday	11 AM	WHUT-32
	Saturday	10 AM	WMPT-22
New York:	Saturday	9 AM	WNET-13
Chicago:	Thursday	10:30 PM	WYCC-20
Los Angeles:	Saturday	2 PM	KCET-28
Boston:	Friday	6 PM	WGBX-2

THINK TANK: THE PBS PROGRAM ON IDEAS

Support for **THINK TANK** is provided by Pfizer Inc., The Smith Richardson Foundation, the Lynne and Harry Bradley Foundation, the John M. Olin Foundation, and the Bernard & Irene Schwartz Foundation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You deserve a factual look at...

Those "West Bank" Settlements

Are they *really* the "greatest obstacle to peace"?

The Palestinians have once again erupted in bloody uprising, an uprising in which so far hundreds have been killed and thousands have been wounded. Even though the terms of a final settlement of the decades-old dispute between Israeli Jews and Palestinians were clearly spelled out in the Oslo Agreement, the Palestinians insist that the so-called "settlements" in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") should be dismantled or, at the very least, that not a single building may be added to them.

What are the facts?

A thumbnail history. In order to gain perspective, some thumbnail history is in order. Large numbers of Jews have been living in these territories since biblical times—without interruption. Most of the Arabs living there are in fact relative newcomers. As the term "Palestine" is understood, it encompasses the entire area now covered by Israel including Judea/Samaria (the so-called "West Bank") and what is now the Kingdom of Jordan. It originally also included the Golan Heights. In 1922, totally contrary to the Mandate of the League of Nations, the British severed the entire area east of the Jordan River and gave it to the Hashemites as reward for their assistance in World War I. Thus, fully 75% of Palestine, all of which under the Mandate and under the terms of the Balfour Declaration was meant to be a home for the Jewish people, was lost for that purpose. Only the area west of the Jordan River was left for the Jewish homeland.

The "West Bank" occupied by Jordan. In 1947, after decades of strife between Arabs and Jews in the territories west of the Jordan River, the British had enough and relinquished the Mandate. The United Nations proposed a partition plan under which the country (west of the River) was to be divided into respective Arab and Jewish areas. Jerusalem was to be internationalized. The Jews accepted the plan; the Arabs refused it out of hand. In 1948, on the twice truncated territory allotted to them by the United Nations, the Jews declared their independence and the state of Israel was born. On the same day, six Arab armies invaded the new-born state. In what can only be described as an almost biblical miracle, the ragged and poorly armed Jews defeated the six Arab armies, though at staggering cost in lives. When an armistice was finally secured, however, TransJordan remained in possession of the "West Bank" and the eastern part of Jerusalem; Egypt retained the Gaza Strip. TransJordan promptly renamed itself Jordan.

Israel recaptures the "West Bank" in Six-Day War. Once they were in possession of the "West Bank" and eastern Jerusalem, the Jordanians immediately proceeded to expel all Jews from these territories and to make them "judenrein". They then proceeded systematically to desecrate most Jewish sacred places, cemeteries and houses of worship. No Jews, regardless of whether they were Israelis, Americans or citizens of any other country, were allowed into the "West Bank" or eastern Jerusalem, the locale of the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism. In 1967, Egyptian president Abdel Nasser, joined by the same array of Arab armies that had unsuccessfully tried to destroy Israel at its birth in 1948, launched another war against Israel. He promised that this time he would "drive the Jews into the sea" and into oblivion, once and for all. The Israelis pre-empted and defeated and utterly destroyed the combined Arab might in the Six-Day War, one of the greatest military victories in history. When the fog and dust of war finally settled, the Israelis had not only retained their national territory, but had *repossessed* the territories of Judea/Samaria (later called the "West Bank"), the eastern part of Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and had totally occupied Egypt's vast Sinai Peninsula.

> "How can 200,000 Jews living among one million Arabs be an obstacle to peace? Over one million Arabs live in Israel...nobody considers *them* an obstacle to peace."

It is clear from this short history that Israel's claim to the "West Bank" is a strong one. By constant repetition, the world has come to think of these territories as "occupied Arab land". Over 200,000 Jews now live there. And why shouldn't they? Why should the Arab countries and the "West Bank" be the only places in the world where Jews cannot live? How can 200,000 Jews living among one million Arabs be "an obstacle to peace"? And why does absolutely nobody care about how many Arabs "settle" in the "West Bank"? The over one million Arabs who live in Israel are citizens, enjoy every civil right, and have nothing to fear from the Jews. Nobody considers them an "obstacle to peace".

This ad has been published and paid for by

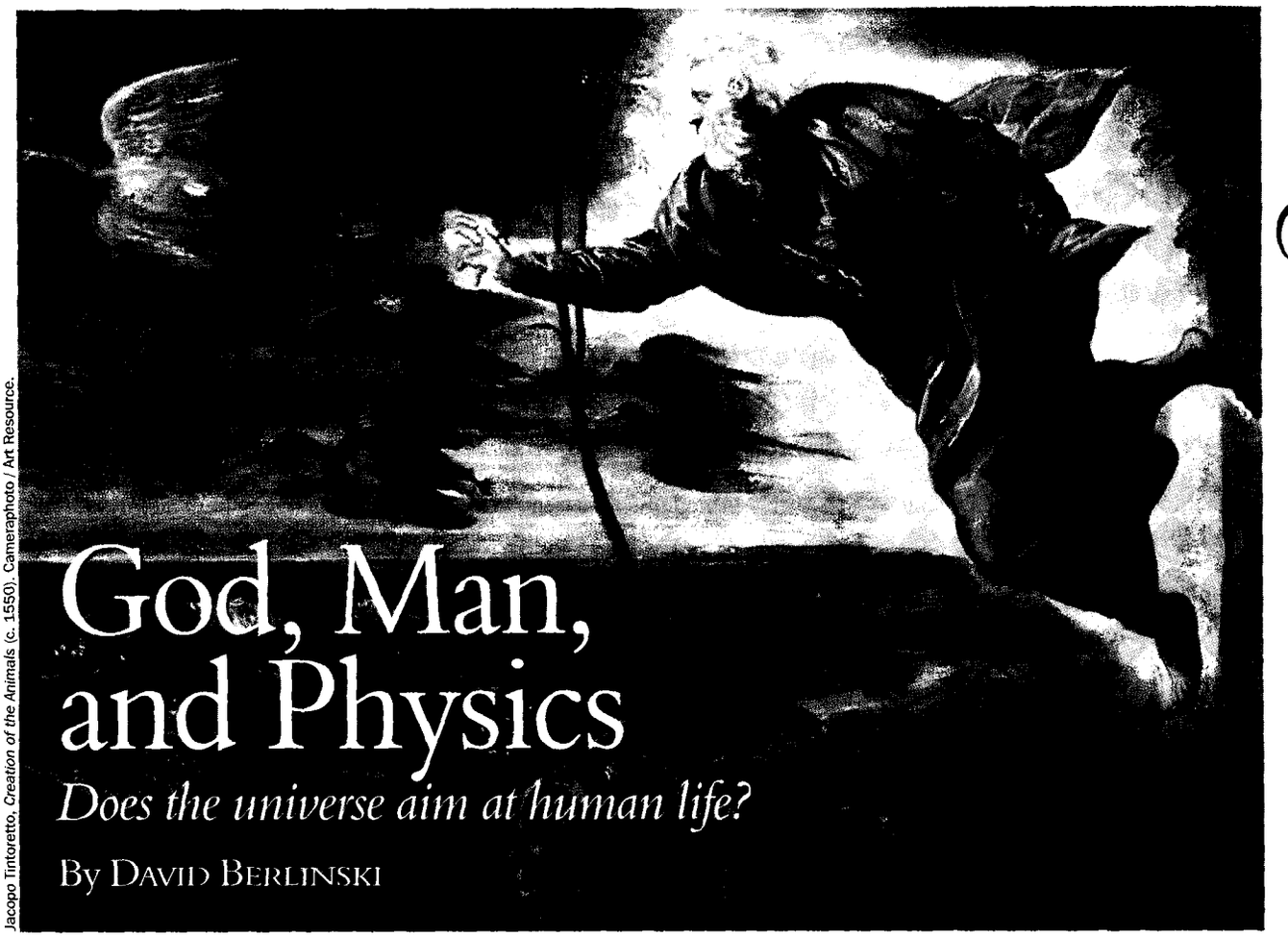
FLAME

Facts and Logic About the Middle East
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159
Gerardo Joffe, President

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501(c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

Visit our website: www.factsandlogic.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Jacopo Tintoretto, *Creation of the Animals* (c. 1550). Cameraphoto / Art Resource.

God, Man, and Physics

Does the universe aim at human life?

By David Berlinski

God's existence is not required by the premises of quantum mechanics or general relativity, the great theories of twentieth-century physics—but then again, it is not contravened by their conclusions either. What else can we do but watch and wait?

The agnostic straddle. It is hardly a posture calculated to set the blood racing. In the early 1970s Jacques Monod and Steven Weinberg thus declared themselves in favor of atheism, each man eager to communicate his discovery that the universe is without plan or purpose. Any number of philosophers have embraced their platform, often clambering onto it by brute force. Were God to exist, Thomas Nagel remarked, he would not only be surprised, but disappointed.

A great many ordinary men and women have found both atheism and agnosticism dispiriting—evidence, perhaps, of their remarkable capacity for intellectual ingratitude. The fact remains that the intellectual's pendulum has swung along rather a tight little arc for much of the twentieth century: atheism, the agnostic straddle, atheism, the agnostic straddle.

A writer in Paris, David Berlinski is the author of A Tour of the Calculus *and* The Advent of the Algorithm. *His most recent book is* Newton's Gift *(Free Press).*

The God Hypothesis
Discovering Design in our "Just Right" Goldilocks Universe
by Michael A. Corey
Rowman & Littlefield, 256 pp., $27

The revival of natural theology in the past twenty-five years has enabled that pendulum to achieve an unexpected amplitude, its tip moving beyond atheism and the agnostic straddle to something like religious awe, if not religious faith.

It has been largely the consolidation of theoretical cosmology that has powered the upward swing. Edwin Hubble's discovery that the universe seemed to be expanding in every direction electrified the community of cosmologists in the late 1920s, and cosmologists were again electrified when it became clear that these facts followed from Einstein's general theory of relativity. Thereafter, their excitement diminished, if only because the idea that the universe was expanding suggested inexorably that it was expanding from an origin of some sort, a *big bang*, as the astronomer Fred Hoyle sniffed contemptuously.

In 1963 Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson inadvertently noticed the background microwave radiation predicted by Big Bang cosmology; when Robert Dicke confirmed the significance of their observation, competing steady-state theories of creation descended at once into desuetude. And thereafter a speculative story became a credible secular myth.

But if credible, the myth was also incomplete. The universe, cosmologists affirmed, erupted into existence fifteen billion years ago. Details were available, some going back to the first three minutes of creation. Well and good. But the metaphoric assimilation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the Big Bang to the general run of eruptions conveyed an entirely misleading sense of similarity. The eruption of Mount Vesuvius took place *in* space and time; the Big Bang marks the spot at which time and space taper to a singularity and then vanish altogether.

It follows that the universe came into existence from nothing whatsoever, and for no good reason that anyone could discern, least of all cosmologists. Even the most ardent village atheist became uneasily aware that Big Bang cosmology and the opening chapters of the Book of Genesis shared a family resemblance too obvious profitably to be denied.

Thereafter, natural theology, long thought dead of inanition, began appearing at any number of colloquia in mathematical physics, often welcomed by the same physicists who had recently been heard reading its funeral obsequies aloud. In *The God Hypothesis: Discovering Design in our "Just Right" Goldilocks Universe*, Michael A. Corey is concerned to convey their news without worrying overmuch about the details. His message is simple. There is a God, a figure at once omnipotent, omniscient, eternal, and necessary. Science has established his existence.

How very embarrassing that this should have been overlooked.

At the very heart of revived natural theology are what the physicist Brandon Carter called "anthropic coincidences." Certain structural features of the universe, Carter argued, seemed finally tuned to permit the emergence of life. This is a declaration, to be sure, that suggests far more than it asserts. *Structural features? Finely tuned? Permit?* When the metaphors are squeezed dry, what more is at issue beyond the observation that life is a contingent affair? This is not a thesis in dispute.

Still, it often happens that commonplace observations, when sharpened, prompt questions that they had long concealed. The laws of physics draw a connection between the nature of certain material objects and their behavior. Falling from a great height, an astrophysicist no less than an airplane accelerates toward the center of the earth. Newton's law of gravitational attraction provides an account of this tendency in terms of mass and distance (or heft and separation). In order to gain traction on the real world, the law requires a fixed constant, a number that remains unchanged as mass and distance vary. Such is Newton's universal gravitational constant.

There are many comparable constants throughout mathematical physics, and they appear to have no very obvious mathematical properties. They are what they are. But if arbitrary, they are also crucial. Were they to vary from the values that they have, this happy universe—such is the claim—would be too small or too large or too gaseous or otherwise too flaccid to sustain life. And these are circumstances that, if true, plainly require an explanation.

Corey and Hoyle may well be right in their conclusions about the universe. It is their argument that does not inspire confidence.

Carter was a capable physicist; instead of being chuckled over and dismissed by a handful of specialists, the paper that he wrote in 1974 was widely read, Fred Hoyle, Freeman Dyson, Martin Rees, Stephen Hawking, Paul Davies, Steven Weinberg, Robert Jastrow, and John Gribbin all contributing to the general chatter. Very few physicists took the inferential trail to its conclusion in faith; what is notable is that any of them took the trail at all.

The astronomer Fred Hoyle is a case in point, his atheism in the end corrected by his pleased astonishment at his own existence. Living systems are based on carbon, he observed, and carbon is formed within stars by a process of nucleosynthesis. (The theory of nucleosynthesis is, indeed, partly his creation.) Two helium atoms fuse to form a beryllium intermediate, which then fuses again with another helium atom to form carbon. The process is unstable because beryllium intermediates are short-lived.

In 1953 Edwin Salpeter discovered that the resonance between helium and intermediate beryllium atoms, like the relation between an opera singer and the glass she shatters, is precisely tuned to facilitate beryllium production. Hoyle then discovered a second nuclear resonance, this one acting between beryllium and helium, and finely tuned as well.

Without carbon, no life. And without specific nuclear resonance levels, no carbon. And yet there *he* was, Hoyle affirmed, carbon based to the core. Nature, he said in a remark widely quoted, seems to be "a put-up job."

Inferences now have a tendency to go off like a string of firecrackers, some of them wet. Hoyle had himself discovered the scenario that made carbon synthesis possible. He thus assigned to what he called a "Supercalculating Intellect" powers that resembled his own. Mindful, perhaps, of the ancient wisdom that God alone knows who God is, he did not go further. Corey is, on the other hand, quite certain that Hoyle's Supercalculating Intellect is, in fact, a transcendental deity—*the* Deity, to afford Him a promotion in punctuation.

And Corey is certain, moreover, that he quite knows His motives. The Deity, in setting nuclear resonance levels, undertook his affairs "*in order* to create carbon based life forms."

Did He indeed? It is by no means obvious. For all we know, the Deity's concern may have lain with the pleasurable intricacies of nucleosynthesis, the emergence of life proving, like so many other things, an inadvertent consequence of his tinkering. For that matter, what sense does it make to invoke the Deity's long term *goals*,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when it is His existence that is at issue? If nothing else, natural theology would seem to be a trickier business than physicists may have imagined.

As it happens, the gravamen of Corey's argument lies less with what the Deity may have had in mind and more with the obstacles He presumably needed to overcome. "The cumulative effect of this fine tuning," Corey argues, "is that, against all the odds, carbon was able to be manufactured in sufficient quantities inside stellar interiors to make our lives possible." That is the heart of the matter: *against all the odds*. And the obvious question that follows: Just how do we know this?

Corey does not address the question specifically, but he offers an answer nonetheless. It is, in fact, the answer Hoyle provides as well. They both suppose that something like an imaginary lottery (or roulette wheel) governs the distribution of values to the nuclear resonance levels of beryllium or helium. The wheel is spun. And thereafter the *right* resonance levels appear. The odds now reflect the pattern familiar in any probabilistic process—one specified outcome weighed against all the rest. If nuclear resonance levels are, in fact, unique, their emergence on the scene would have the satisfying aspect of a miracle.

It is a miracle, of course, whose luster is apt to dim considerably if other nuclear resonance levels might have done the job and thus won the lottery. And this is precisely what we do not know. The nuclear resonance levels specified by Hoyle are *sufficient* for the production of carbon. The evidence is all around us. It is entirely less clear that they are *necessary* as well. Corey and Hoyle make the argument that they are necessary because, if changed slightly, nucleosynthesis would stop. "Overall, it is safe to say"—Corey is speaking, Hoyle nodding—"that given the utter precision displayed by these nuclear resonances with respect to the synthesis of carbon, not even *one* of them could have been *slightly* different without destroying their precious carbon yield." This is true, but inconclusive. Mountain peaks are isolated but not unique. Corey and Hoyle may well be right in their conclusions. It is their argument that does not inspire confidence.

God the Father Measuring the Universe (13th century). Erich Lessing / Art Resource.

The trouble is not merely a matter of the logical niceties. Revived natural theology has staked its claims on probability. There is nothing amiss in this. Like the rest of us, physicists calculate the odds when they cannot calculate anything better. The model to which they appeal may be an imaginary lottery, roulette wheel, or even a flipped coin, but *imaginary* is the governing word. Whatever the model, it corresponds to no plausible *physical* mechanism. The situation is very different in molecular biology, which is one reason criticism of neo-Darwinism very often has biting power. When biologists speculate on the origins of life, they have in mind a scenario in which various chemicals slosh around randomly in some clearly defined physical medium. What does the sloshing with respect to nuclear resonance?

Or with respect to anything else? Current dogma suggests that many of the constants of mathematical physics were fixed from the first, and so constitute a part of the initial conditions of the Big Bang. Corey does not demur; it is a conclusion that he endorses. What then is left of the anthropic claim that the fundamental constants have the value that they do despite "all odds"? In the beginning there was no time, no place, no lottery at all.

Mathematical physics currently trades in four fundamental forces: gravity, electromagnetism, and the strong and weak forces governing the nucleus and radioactive decay. In general relativity and quantum mechanics, it contains two great but incompatible theories. This is clearly an embarrassment of riches. If possible, unification of these forces and the-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ories is desirable. And not only unification, but unification in the form of a complete and consistent theoretical structure.

Such a theory, thoughtful physicists imagine, might serve to show that the anthropic coincidences are an illusion in that they are not coincidences at all. The point is familiar. Egyptian engineers working under the pharaohs knew that the angles of a triangle sum to more or less one hundred and eighty degrees. The number appears as a free parameter in their theories, something given by experience and experiment. The Greeks, on the other hand, could *prove* what the Egyptians could only calculate. No one would today think to ask why the interior angles of a Euclidean triangle sum to precisely one hundred and eighty degrees. The question is closed because the answer is necessary.

The grand hope of modern mathematical physicists is that something similar will happen in modern mathematical physics. The Standard Model of particle physics contains a great many numerical slots that must be filled in by hand. This is never counted as a satisfaction, but a more powerful physical theory might show how those numerical slots are naturally filled, their particular values determined ultimately by the theory's fundamental principles. If this proves so, the anthropic coincidences will lose their power to vex and confound.

Nonetheless, the creation of a complete and consistent physical theory will not put an end to revived natural theology. Questions once asked about the fundamental constants of mathematical physics are bound to reappear as questions about the nature of its laws. The constants of mathematical physics may make possible the existence of life, but the laws of mathematical physics make possible the existence of *matter*. They have, those laws, an overwhelmingly specific character. Other laws, under which not much exists, are at least imaginable. What explanation can mathematical physics itself provide for the fact that the laws of nature are arranged as they are and that they have the form that they do? It is hardly an unreasonable question.

Steven Weinberg has suggested that a final theory must be logically *isolated* in the sense that any perturbation of its essential features would destroy the theory's coherence. Logical isolation is by no means a clear concept, and it is one of the ironies of modern mathematical physics that the logical properties of the great physical theories are no less mysterious than the physical properties of the universe they are meant to explain. Let us leave the details to those who cherish them.

The tactic is clear enough. The laws of a final theory determine its parameters; its logical structure determines its laws. No further transcendental inference is required, if only because that final theory explains itself.

This is very elegant. It is also entirely unpersuasive. A theory that is logically isolated is not necessarily a theory that is logically unique. Other theories may be possible, some governing imaginary worlds in which light alone exists, others worlds in which there is nothing whatsoever. The world in which we find ourselves is one in which galaxies wink and matter fills the cup of creation. What brings about the happy circumstance that the laws making this possible are precisely the laws making it real? The old familiar circle.

All this leaves us where we so often find ourselves. We are confronted with certain open questions. We do not know the answers, but what is worse, we have no clear idea—no idea whatsoever—of how they might be answered. But perhaps that is where we should be left: in the dark, tortured by confusing hints, intimations of immortality, and a sense that, dear God, we really do not yet understand. ♦

Looking Backwards

Pat Buchanan's world.

BY JOSH CHAFETZ

Pat Buchanan's thesis in *The Death of the West* is simple enough: The "cultural revolution" that swept across the West in the 1960s led to widespread libertinism, one consequence of which has been a drastic lowering of the birthrate in Western societies. As a result, the United States and Europe face a stark choice: We can either allow our populations to dwindle away, or we can surrender to the invading hordes of immigrants from the rest of the world and wind up living in a "Third World America." Either way, Western civilization dies.

The Death of the West
How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Country and Civilization
by Patrick J. Buchanan
Dunne, 320 pp., $25.95

Buchanan is surely right that the second half of the twentieth century was not particularly good for Western culture. Allan Bloom made the point brilliantly in his classic *The Closing of the American Mind*. But Buchanan forgoes an intelligent and subtle analysis in favor of a simple and superficial one. In his view, the problems all began with (naturally) a group of foreigners—the cultural Marxists of the Frankfurt School, many of whom fled to America in the mid-1930s.

The theorists of the Frankfurt School believed, rightly, that the West would never accept communism as

Josh Chafetz, an American Rhodes Scholar, is a graduate student in politics at Merton College, Oxford.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

long as it held to its Western cultural heritage. So they set about trying to overturn that heritage through what came to be known as "Critical Theory," which involved showing that every institution of Western civilization is grounded in oppression, with the obvious conclusion being that these institutions should be overthrown.

As Buchanan sees it, the most baleful influence of this theory was on women's sexual mores. In fact, Buchanan places almost all the blame for the West's declining population squarely on women. "German women are refusing to have children," he writes, and "European women consider [their] personal desires to be far more compelling than demographic studies describing what Europe will look like when they are seventy or eighty."

To prove that declining birthrates are linked to the cultural revolution, Buchanan quotes from admittedly outrageous denunciations of Western culture from Susan Sontag, Catharine MacKinnon, and the 1973 *Humanist Manifesto*—which leaves the reader with a curious juxtaposition: Sontag's impassioned insistence that evil right-wingers like Buchanan run the world, and Buchanan's equally impassioned assertion that evil militant liberationists like Sontag are in control.

Buchanan's heavy-handed cultural commentary forces him to insist that nearly every change in the last fifty years has been bad. His populist economics and cultural pessimism combine to produce such claims as "When the income tax rate for the wealthiest was above 90 percent in the 1950s, America, by every moral and social indicator, was a better country." One wonders what that says about 1950s segregation, but Buchanan glosses over the entire civil rights movement in two sentences: "America said yes. Black and white together, America went out and buried Jim Crow." At the same time, he spends pages decrying the fact that "America's cultural elite is almost slavishly on the side of those who wish to dishonor every banner and disgrace every leader associated with the Confederate States of America."

Throughout, it is on the issue of race that Buchanan's book is at its ugliest. His view of Western civilization is irreducibly racialist. His argument that unchecked immigration spells the death of Western civilization makes sense only if he assumes that the assimilation of new immigrants is impossible. But since America has always been a land of immigrants, and they have always assimilated before, he must argue that recent immigrants are different. And here, he stands on race. In discussing Great Britain, he approvingly cites Paul Craig Roberts's statement that "by the end of this century

Meet the Press

the English people will be a minority in their homeland." Of course, what Roberts and Buchanan actually mean is that white people will be a minority. Britain is becoming what America has always been: a land of immigrants—a fact which then foreign secretary Robin Cook recognized last year when he declared that chicken tikka masala is "Britain's true national dish." Just as Americans no longer think of Italian food as foreign or of Americans of Italian descent as foreigners, so too many Britons of Indian descent are becoming assimilated citizens.

Buchanan's reply is that Italians are white, while Indians are not. And, to Buchanan, "History and experience teach us that different races are far more difficult to assimilate." History teaches no such thing. As Ian F. Haney López demonstrated in his 1996 *White By Law*, what history actually teaches is that groups not originally considered white come to be thought white precisely as they are assimilated. Italians, Greeks, Slavs, Jews, and many other groups were long declared nonwhite in American society. Today we can have a bagel for lunch and lasagna for dinner without ever thinking we are eating ethnic foods.

Against this, Buchanan suggests that the new waves of immigrants don't want to assimilate: "Mexican Americans are creating an Hispanic culture separate and apart from America's larger culture. They are becoming a nation within a nation." Leaving aside the obvious point that first-generation immigrants in earlier waves were at least as ghettoized, it is not even clear that Buchanan is right about this. He argues that Hispanics vote increasingly as a bloc. The falsity of the claim is demonstrated by numbers Buchanan himself cites earlier in the book, showing that George W. Bush got 35 percent of the Hispanic vote in 2000, while Bob Dole got only 21 percent in 1996. In New York's recent mayoral election, Republican Michael Bloomberg received 47 percent of the Hispanic vote in his victory over Mark Green. What bloc?

Once upon a time, Buchanan was a sharp journalistic writer, which makes it odd that *The Death of the West* is so gracelessly written. The prose is both labored ("Like colon cancer, the long-term threat to the West lies deep within") and cliché ridden ("And we cannot go gentle into that good night"). The real problem, however, is that it profoundly misunderstands the civilization whose eulogy it gives. Yes, religion and traditional morality are components of Western civilization. But that's true of every civilization. One of the things that makes Western civilization unique is how it deals with newcomers to its shores. We may not be assimilating immigrants as well as we used to, and we should do better, but ceasing to accept them—that would be the death of the West. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Printing the Web

Why do online magazines want their work preserved in books? BY RICHARD KOSTELANETZ

Few publishing developments seem to offer as much opportunity as the Internet periodical. Easy to start and cheap to publish, web magazines such as *Slate* allow editors to update constantly their words and pictures. Instead of arriving in the mail like traditional magazines, the "webzines" are received on one's computer by e-mail or read by going through the Internet to their addresses—available to everyone.

The fact is, for immediate news as well as concise information, websites have quickly proved they are indispensable. For more considered kinds of writing, I'm not so sure. Apparently to elevate their cultural status, several Internet periodicals have recently issued books—you remember, those bound things the computer was going to replace?—selected from their disseminations.

The assumption appears to be that a book grants an Internet periodical credibility, as indeed it does. Then, too, a self-retrospective selected from any magazine—online or not—makes that publication seem more credible. But these books from *Pif*, *Salon*, *Nerve*, the *Smoking Gun*, and the *Onion* do not assuage much skepticism about web magazines.

The Best of Pif Magazine Off-Line
Short Stories, Poetry, and Essays Selected from PifMagazine.com
edited by Camille Renshaw, et al.
Fusion, 152 pp., $14.95

The Salon.Com Reader's Guide to Contemporary Authors
An Opinionated, Irreverent Look at the Most Fascinating Writers of Our Time
edited by Laura Miller and Adam Begley
Penguin, 512 pp., $16.95

Full Frontal Fiction
The Best of Nerve.Com
edited by Jack Murnighan, et al.
Three Rivers, 285 pp., $14

The Smoking Gun
A Dossier of Secret, Surprising, and Salacious Documents from the Files of TheSmokingGun.com
edited by William Batstone, et al.
Little, Brown, 224 pp., $14.95

Dispatches from the Tenth Circle
The Best of the Onion
edited by Robert Siegel, et al.
Three Rivers, 174 pp., $16

To judge from its self-retrospective, *Pif* is no better or worse than any of a hundred other nonacademic literary journals, mixing an undistinguished selection of creative writing with equally ordinary interviews of literary celebrities. (The principal exception is a witty parody by Richard K. Weems of "The New *New Yorker*.")

The purpose behind *The Salon.com Reader's Guide to Contemporary Authors* escapes me, as it prints short summaries mostly of commercial writers about whom much other introductory material can be found. Precisely because search engines can locate specific names so efficiently, the Internet is a rich reference library for contemporary subjects, as distinct from a repository for extended criticism of historical material; so that this *Reader's Guide* necessarily competes with other book directories but not with the Internet itself. And loses. Though the book's cover claims it is "opinionated" and "irreverent," my impression was that most of the summaries were culled from publishers' publicity packets.

As a website, *Nerve.com* mixes come-hither ads with fiction—and since the ads are not meant for reprinting, the fiction has to stand on its own literary merits. The result is no great shake, as *Nerve.com*'s *Full Frontal Fiction* is no better or worse than many other anthologies of erotica appearing nowadays with conventional narratives portraying familiar experience. Insofar as the book's title suggests something special, it is a misnomer. As it happens, many of *Nerve*'s writers are moderately famous—Jay McInerney, Mary Gaitskill, Elizabeth Wurtzel, A.M. Homes, among them—indicating that its editors pay well and that revenue from somewhere else must be supporting such literary vanity. (A sign of celebrity publishing is the absence of biographical notes for the authors, the editors assuming that their names must already be familiar.) The major innovation in *Full Frontal Fiction* is running heads printed in the margins, its type perpendicular to the text, facing inwards on both sides. Expect to see that layout feature repeated elsewhere sooner than the fiction reprinted.

The website accessible as *TheSmokingGun.com* was recommended in a recent *Yahoo* monthly for "Best Exposés," as it publishes previously hidden public documents much as I.F. Stone used to do decades ago. But where Izzy Stone made house calls to repositories, William Batstone and his colleagues at the *Smoking Gun* exploit the Freedom of Information Act to get government flunkies to deliver embarrassing papers; and where Stone wanted to expose politicians' cover-ups, the gun-smokers deflate mostly vulgar celebrities whom most of us already assumed to be discreditable. The secrets exposed here are less general than specific. Few are genuinely "salacious," contrary to the book's subtitle. Fewer are mind-breaking.

The *Onion*, on the other hand, is an attractively irreverent, politically incorrect online journal that only recently moved from its birthplace in Madison, Wisconsin, to New York. Large in format—nine by twelve inch-

A poet and author of many books, Richard Kostelanetz offers more information about himself and his publications on richardkostelanetz.com.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

es—*Dispatches from the Tenth Circle* is meant to look like a tabloid newspaper, with several items to a page, each preceded by a headline, some continued on succeeding pages. Each page has as well at least one picture. The result is continuously delightful to a degree that the actual *Onion* newspaper is not, repeatedly interrupted as it is by ads. The headlines tend to be funnier than the articles beneath them:

- *U.S. Ambassador to Bulungi Suspected of Making Country Up*
- *Miracle of Birth Occurs for the 83 Billionth Time*
- *I Lost 32 Pounds in 15 Days and Died!*
- *ACLU Defends Nazis' Right to Burn Down ACLU Headquarters*
- *Thousands Dead in Indonesia Again*

Consider them a measure of either tastelessness or cultural courage. I found myself reading only the headlines the first time through the book (much as I do in pursuing *Mad Magazine*'s many self-retrospectives, which this resembles). On second reading, I discovered a few marvelous texts, most of them short, and especially recommend from page thirty a self-obituary by a dog put to sleep for "digging in the plants." So much content, even if purportedly selective, makes *Dispatches from the Tenth Circle* look more substantial than the website would suggest. Indeed, to my mind, this book is better.

As a book author who appreciates the Internet, especially for allowing me to gather information quickly, I find it interesting that Internet publishers should want their contents preserved in the traditional medium. But these volumes demonstrate a truth not to be forgotten: Genuine books require more content than websites yet offer. ♦

Fighting Death

The argument against euthanasia.

BY WESLEY J. SMITH

Supporters of legalizing assisted suicide often claim religious belief is the only reason to oppose killing as an acceptable answer to human suffering. That being so, the argument goes, prohibitions against assisted suicide actually amount to the imposition of religious doctrine on statutory law, which violates the First Amendment's establishment clause.

The Case Against Assisted Suicide
For the Right to End-Of-Life Care
edited by Kathleen M. Foley and Herbert Hendin
Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 392 pp., $49.95

The entire notion is ridiculous, of course. Laws prohibiting assisted suicide are no more religious than statutes outlawing theft. For that matter, why shouldn't religious views have as much place in the marketplace of ideas as perspectives founded in philosophy, political ideology, or personal preference?

But there's another point to make, as well—which is that religion is only one of the reasons Americans oppose the euthanasia agenda. In fact, underreported in the popular press, opponents of assisted suicide have formed an alliance that cuts across ideological fissures and religious-versus-secular divisions. The Catholic church participates in this coalition with such distinctly secular national organizations as Not Dead Yet and the National Spinal Cord Injury Association. The pro-life movement opposes assisted suicide, but so do most of the world's professional medical organizations, virtually all of which support a right to abortion. And consider this: One of the nation's most vocal opponents of euthanasia is the venerable civil libertarian and atheist Nat Hentoff.

This loose coalition of strange political bedfellows had not coalesced when Oregon passed its assisted suicide law by a vote of 51 to 49 percent in 1994. That event, combined with the predations of Jack Kevorkian, sparked its formation. Since then, the opposition to assisted suicide in the United States has strengthened. In 1998, Michigan, the home state of Kevorkian, rejected legalizing assisted suicide by a vote of 71 to 29 percent. In 2000, even liberal Maine turned it down by 51 to 49 percent. Jack Kevorkian is in a penitentiary. The United States Supreme Court and the state supreme courts of Florida and Alaska have all refused to recognize a constitutional right to assisted suicide. Meanwhile, people who assist in "private" suicides are increasingly being sent to prison for their crimes.

Still, the myth persists that opposition to assisted suicide is based in religion, and the issue is often presented by the media as a clash between secular modernism and Luddite religion. That presumption will be impossible to maintain with the publication of *The Case Against Assisted Suicide*, edited by Kathleen Foley, one of the nation's foremost experts in pain control and palliative care, and psychiatrist Herbert Hendin, medical director of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

The Case Against Assisted Suicide presents a compelling argument for improving the treatment of disabled and dying people. It is also particularly telling in its analysis of euthanasia in the Netherlands. "Virtually every guideline set up by the Dutch" designed to protect against abuse "has failed to protect patients or has been modified or violated," the book concludes. Many critics have attacked Dutch physicians for killing patients who have not requested to be eutha-

Wesley J. Smith, a frequent contributor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, *is the author of* Culture of Death: The Assault on Medical Ethics in America.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORBIS

nized, but apologists for euthanasia claim the numbers of such deaths are decreasing. Now Hendin, who has spent years researching Dutch euthanasia, demonstrates that the reverse is actually true: Involuntary and nonvoluntary euthanasia *rose* from about 1 percent of all Dutch deaths in 1990 to 1.4 percent in 1995.

One wishes we had similar statistics about how the Oregon law is actually working. In an essay in *The Case Against Assisted Suicide*, psychiatrist Gregory Hamilton, president of Oregon's Physicians for Compassionate Care, reveals that rather than being an open experiment as promised by assisted suicide proponents, euthanasia in Oregon is practiced behind a shroud of secrecy. Most of what we know comes from forms filled out by the doctors who lethally prescribe, and even the Oregon Public Health Services admits it doesn't know if physicians honestly or fully report on their activities.

Hamilton examines what little we do have from published statistics and a few media reports. Many patients who have committed assisted suicide did not receive their prescribed overdoses from their own doctors. Why would the patients' own doctors not participate in their assisted deaths? We simply don't know. The Oregon Public Health Services, which will speak only with the doctors who prescribed the overdoses (many of whom are ideologically predisposed to assisted suicide and are affiliated with the assisted suicide advocacy groups), has yet to contact other doctors to learn why they refused to assist their patients' suicides.

Hamilton also describes the underreported case of Kate Cheney's assisted suicide. (See "Suicide Unlimited in Oregon" in the November 8, 1999, WEEKLY STANDARD.) Cheney was a cancer-stricken eighty-five-year-old woman with growing dementia. When she requested assisted suicide, she was examined by a psychiatrist who, Hamilton reports, "found her ineligible for assisted suicide because of her obvious cognitive impairments and because her family appeared to be pressuring her." If the guidelines worked as promised, that should have been that. But it wasn't. Cheney's daughter merely decided to get another opinion. Despite finding the daughter to be "somewhat coercive," the second opinion, from a psychologist, approved the assisted suicide.

The practice of doctor shopping until the wanted answer is found is troubling enough. But the person making the final decision whether to lethally prescribe in the Cheney case was not her own doctor but an administrator for Kaiser Permanente, her HMO. Did money influence the administrator's decision? He denies it. But as Hamilton points out, "this case illustrates how once assisted suicide is legalized, there is no way to protect those who are vulnerable and mentally ill from social or even financial pressures."

In another essay in *The Case Against Assisted Suicide*, Diane Coleman, founder of the national advocacy organization Not Dead Yet, makes the case against legalizing assisted suicide from the perspective of the disabled. Not Dead Yet was formed in reaction to the popular applause at Kevorkian's repeated assistance in the death of people with non-terminal disabilities. (Approximately 75 percent of Kevorkian's victims were not terminally ill. At least five had no illnesses or disabilities determinable upon autopsy.) "It was as though 'open season' had been declared on disabled people," Coleman writes. She convincingly argues that the assisted-suicide movement is not really about relieving the suffering associated with terminal illness but about the popular perception that it is better to be dead than disabled. That attitude often rubs off on disabled people who thus come to see themselves as burdens.

In its final section, *The Case Against Assisted Suicide* provides proof that there is a better way to grapple with terminal illness and disability. Among the contributors to this portion of the book is Dame Cicely Saunders, the British humanitarian who founded the modern hospice movement. Autonomy, the ideological linchpin of the euthanasia movement, she writes, "must be seen in the context of a society that emphasizes youth and active achievement and so cannot be trusted not to bring pressure on those it considers an emotional or economic burden."

In another chapter, Hendin and Foley examine the physical symptoms, psychological distress, and existential dread of serious illness. Indeed, ill people who express a desire for assisted suicide do it more out of fear of being a burden or losing the ability to engage in enjoyable activities than because of pain. Moreover, these problems can generally be ameliorated. Unfortunately, too many doctors—and patients—are inadequately educated about such matters. Remedying this deficiency is a worthy project for a great nation, and the continuing struggle over assisted suicide is just getting in the way.

The Case Against Assisted Suicide is not exactly beach reading, but the issues of medicalized killing and proper end-of-life care deserve the substance and seriousness that the contributors bring to this important volume. Its thorough documentation and powerful analysis provide a convincing—and wholly secular—case for refusing to allow doctors to kill their suffering patients. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Say, he is hooked on phonics."

Book of the Week

Losing His Stuff

The New Bill James Historical Baseball Abstract by Bill James (Free Press, 998 pp., $45)

There was a time I was sure the greatest pieces of American prose were the letters of Adams and Jefferson, "Bartleby the Scrivener," *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, and *The Bill James Historical Baseball Abstract*. Who was the writer who used to type out a copy of *The Great Gatsby* every year, just to see what it would feel like to have prose that good? Bill James excited that kind of admiration. He was a statistician capable of writing that he had used the formula {(H + W - CS) x [TB + (.55 x SB)]} / (AB + W) to show that Yogi Berra, not Bill Dickey, was the greatest catcher in Yankee history. And then he would add, almost incidentally, "Yogi was always kind of a funny-looking guy; he looked like if he was a piece of furniture you'd sand him off some."

Back in the 1970s, while working as a night watchman, James began photocopying for friends the statistical analyses he'd been performing on current players. Publication of an annual *Baseball Abstract* followed, praised by writers as diverse as George Will and Norman Mailer. The *Historical Baseball Abstract*, comparing players across the history of the game, came out in 1982 and was expanded and revised for the paperback edition in 1988.

Maybe it was the times that made the book seem so good. Baseball writing was a mystic's game in those days. Roger Kahn's *The Boys of Summer* was a beautiful book. Roger Angell's *Late Innings* contained gorgeous essays. But both were *evocative*—and their imitators, in baseball book after baseball book, couldn't be trusted to pen a sentence without reference to this noble game played on the hard diamond of experience, the rosy dawn of spring training, and the sad, purple twilight of a player's career.

And then along came Bill James to insist that baseball is a game of knowledge, not mystical emotion. Incomplete knowledge, admittedly, subject to chance and imprecision, but still about real things: how often a player gets on base and whether a pitcher throws for speed or control. James was a sort of Aristotelian madman who had narrowed himself to baseball. He knew what could be known, if only we did the math, and he knew what couldn't be known.

The result was a kind of stern reasoning baseball had lacked for years. Rube Waddell "would have been as great a pitcher as Walter Johnson if only he had had the sense God gave a rabbit." Pete Rose was "the least-gifted great player ever." The essays on Shoeless Joe Jackson, Mickey Rivers, and Don Drysdale were classics of knowledge in service of judgment. The article on Hal Chase was as fine an examination of human character as ever insisted it was only about baseball.

That Hal Chase article is reproduced in *The New Bill James Historical Baseball Abstract*, the first revision in 15 years. Unfortunately, it's one of the few old bits to make the new edition. James can still hit the outside corner from time to time, but his fastball has lost its zip, and the new *Historical Abstract* just isn't as interesting as the old. Why does he let Pete Rose off so lightly? Why is Joe Jackson suddenly reprieved? Where's the demand that we remember Stan Musial?

James still has smart things to say. His take on "garbage statistics" (wild pitches, balks, hit-batsmen, and errors) is fascinating. His suspicions about the 1990s game are dead on. He was always slightly crazed about Joe Morgan and Mike Schmidt, so maybe he should be cut a little slack for thinking Craig Biggio the best player today. But there's too much else wrong with the book. Instead of the hundred greatest players in the first edition, James now takes up the hundred greatest at each position. And so, to keep the text down to 998 pages while adding comments on players since 1988, all the incidental comments have been cut. It was, however, the incidental comments that made it all so fun.

Add in James's new propensity for profanity, his apparent forgetting of the difference between "less" and "fewer," and the lack of explanation for his new rating system of "Win Shares," and you have a book that's like Willie Mays coming out for one last season with the Mets: The fans are glad to see him walk to the plate and sad to see him swing.

—J. Bottum

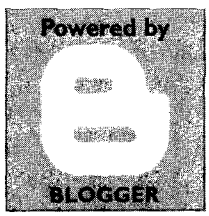
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BlogBlog.com

Front Page

Archive

Contact Us



February 14, 3:45 a.m.

Instapundit had a good piece on the rise of blogging, the creation of web sites to link to interesting pieces on the web, drawing my attention to the point that George Santayana once made to the effect that those who don't have a life are forced to invent one.

Writing in NationalReview.com, Jonah Goldberg nicely rebuts Rich Lowry's amendment to Ramesh's observation that Tim Noah was wrong to object to Mickey Kaus's point about the conflict of interest between Microsoft and Enron in the Cheney energy task force defense. Goldberg buys Rich's claim that if the task force didn't actually meet at the OEOB, but held its consultations merely via the internet in cyberspace, then the reporting requirements would have been lower, but Noah is obtuse in reference to my own brilliant piece contesting Tim's ontological point on the Enron conflicts of interest policy, which had been dissected fully by Dick Morris in Salon, only to be ignored when the Moose tackled the issue in the Onion. Goldberg, Lowry, and Noah expressed their own opinions here, here, and here, but without fully tackling Mickey's final conclusion about welfare reform being the key, so nicely picked up on by the OpinionJournal, Mediacentral.com, and RealClearPolitics.

Meanwhile, in the conflict between good and evil, the Pope has clearly sided with good and against evil in this bull he jotted down on Vaticanblog.com. The Supreme Pontiff couldn't have been clearer in his efforts to side with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost and against the Devil, the Prince of Darkness, and Beelzebub. At stake here is the salvation of mankind, which is nicely illustrated in this posting by Raphael called the Last Judgment.

Alert readers want to know if Britney Spears has had breast reduction surgery after watching her video in which the formerly busty star appears to have slimmed down her front porch, which had grown to Pamela Andersonesque proportions in this video, after having been normally adolescent in Britney's early work.

Good News: This site now has 569,902 unique visitors every hour, or at least every hour during which the words Britney Spears appear for the search engines. If you click here, you will get this same page. The same with here, here, and here.

Correction. Andrew Sullivan takes me to task for not knowing that the devil and the prince of darkness are the same entity, and that both are ancient names for Paul Krugman. Sullivan also scores me for not mentioning that George W. Bush walks on water. But Virginia Postrel slams Sullivan, Stephen Ambrose, as well as this David Corn column and Glenn Reynolds for not writing me to correct my Raphael reference, citing this James Glassman piece.

There's an interesting exchange on Taliblog between Mullah Omar and Osama.com on the hair color of the 70 virgins who await martyrs in heaven. The one-eyed mullah cites the Punjab Pundit to the effect that the virgins all have Britney Spears colored hair, who differs with Zealotcity.com who claims their hair resembles that of a small cow.

I have lost all touch with reality, and only live to comment on the comments that other bloggers have made in reference to my notes about their comments. Is anybody out there?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Crime Statistics—the Only Game in Town

Joseph D. McNamara is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

The American public likes to believe that police officers are above partisan politics, but is this really the case?

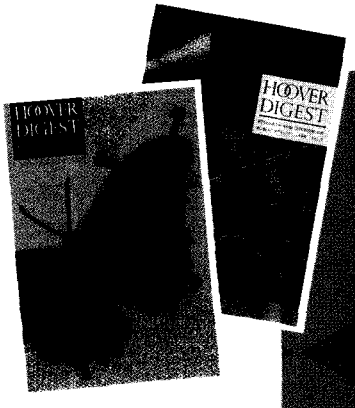
During my more than thirty years as a cop, I produced and sometimes created crime statistics. I started my police career almost half a century ago walking a solo beat in Harlem. My first arrest as a flatfoot was for first-degree murder by virtue of the fact that I bumbled into arresting the perpetrator while the victim lay dying on the sidewalk. During my next ten years in Harlem, I found that cops who were not so lucky but who reported robberies, rapes, burglaries, or other serious felonies with no arrest were unlikely to remain on the force. **No official order was ever given to underreport or not report crimes that weren't cleared, but an officer following the rulebook would soon find out from his sergeant that he had an attitude.** Once sergeants decided you had a wrong attitude it was time to look for another job. One cop I worked with had an outstanding felony arrest record; eight out of ten of his arrests, however, were for assaulting him after he had created an altercation—crime created by a police officer.

Approximately sixteen years after my first arrest, I had risen to the director of crime analysis for the NYPD. Stationed a few blocks from the World Trade Center with the responsibility for compiling and analyzing crime statistics for the city of New York, I found that things hadn't changed much. The mayor didn't like high crime stats with no arrests. Thus, the police commissioner didn't either. The precinct captains knew their careers depended on the amount of crime reported, and, of course, the sergeants knew quite well what the captains wanted. Consequently, it was a bad idea for a rookie to report a robbery with no arrest—much better to make it an unfounded report. It was not illegal, and we had become cops to avoid working in an office and dealing with paperwork.

So are the 30 and 40 percent crime reductions for which Bill Clinton and Rudy Giuliani claim credit phony or real? Some analysts credit full employment, additional police, mandatory sentences, maturation of the crack market, and better policing. Neither human nature nor politics, however, has changed through the years. Next time a candidate or "expert" tells us we need to spend more money to reduce crime, remember the old vaudeville joke: First man: "I saw you playing in that crap game last night. Didn't you know it was crooked?" Second man: "Sure, but it was the only game in town." In most towns, local politics is the only game in town when it comes to precisely counting crime.

— Joseph D. McNamara

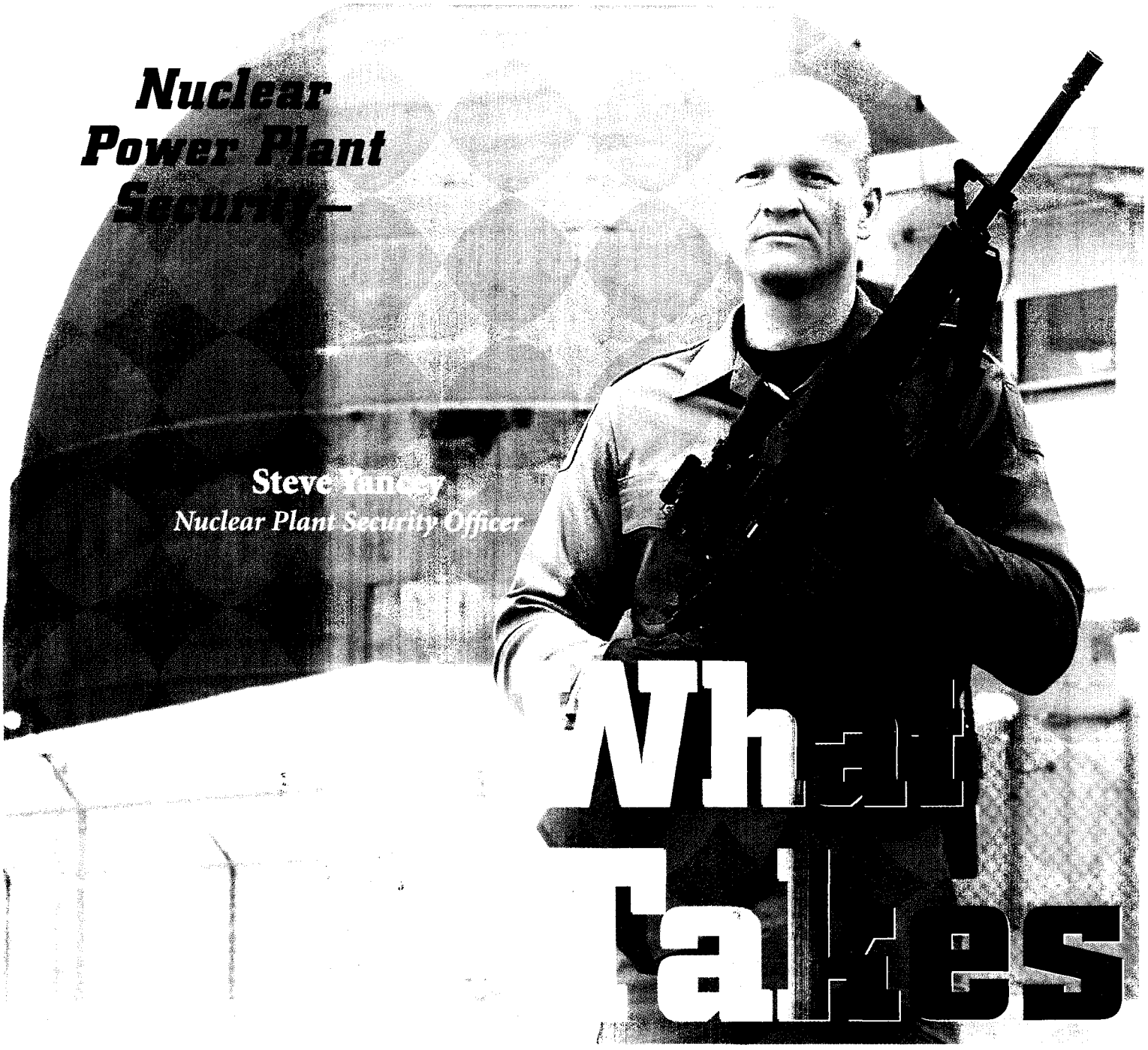
Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



Interested in more commentary on public policy?

Visit us on-line at **www.hoover.org** *or contact us to receive a complimentary copy of the 200-page, award-winning* **Hoover Digest.**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Meet Steve Yancey. Desert Storm Veteran. Marine Infantry Platoon Sergeant. Before that, staff sergeant and military policeman, U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne.

The security of America's nuclear power plants begins with the highly committed... highly trained... well-compensated professionals who protect them. Steve Yancey has what it takes.

Like Yancey, 70% of the security professionals who protect America's nuclear power plants have prior military, law enforcement, or industrial security experience.

They are subject to FBI background checks... psychological screening... substance abuse testing... intense employment scrutiny... and physical fitness testing.

Their training is intense, exacting, and continuous. They are expert marksmen, annually certified in an array of weaponry. In short, they're professionals!

Nuclear power plant security—we've got what it takes.

NEI

NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE

www.nei.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED